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OF EDUCATION, AREOPAGITICA THE COMMONWEALTH

BY

JOHN MILTON

WITH EARLY BIOGRAPHIES OF MILTON
INTRODUCTION, AND NOTES

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INTRODUCTION

This book has been prepared primarily for the use of my students of Milton, but it will, I trust, be helpful to all those who care to know more of a great poet and teacher of men. A part of Milton's prose is hardly worth the labor of reading to-day, because it deals with questions pertaining solely to the seventeenth century, and because it is weighted with the mannerisms of his age in violence of language and in involved method of argument. Some of his prose all students of literature should know, in order to see and feel its relation to his poetry; they should feel the large rise and swell of the prose periods, the richness of imagination, the fervor of feeling, the wide learning, and the nice, discriminating choice of words. They should read it, moreover, to compare Milton's mode of thought and expression with that of the present time. Most students are, in reality, trained in eye and ear by the reading of newspapers and magazines. Their conception of the use of English words, of the English sentence and paragraph, is largely formed from such sources. The reading of the best of Milton's noble and dignified prose is, therefore, illuminating and salutary.

I have chosen the three pamphlets given because they discuss problems which are still of living interest to us. There is no more vital question, nor one upon which there is more disagreement of opinion, than upon the right method of educating our youth. The freedom of printing is to-day practically settled, but so profound is the influence of the press that we are concerned to know the steps by which it attained its freedom and power. All countries have either formed republics or are moving in that direction, and Milton's theorizing on this most difficult ques-

tion has interest, especially for us in the United States, because it seeks to put in shape some fundamentals of the scheme we later wrought out.

These essays differ very much in literary value. The first is an abstract, condensed in form and seeking merely clearness of statement; the second is an elaborate and highly finished composition, written in all confidence and buoyancy of hope; the third is a hastily composed piece of persuasion, thrown off in a mood of despondency and utter hopelessness that colors its every sentence. Because they present different methods and reveal different mental attitudes on the part of the writer, these three essays make an excellent study of Milton, as he expresses himself in the prose form.

In the preparation of the notes to the pamphlets, I wish to acknowledge my very great indebtedness to Masson's *Life*, which must be a constant companion to every serious student of Milton, to Hale's scholarly edition of the *Areopagitica*, and to Gardner and Firth for the historical background. I have, moreover, to thank Professor Parsons for his edition of Biography I, and likewise for most of the notes I have used in connection with it.

II

The biographies of Milton are legion, from Masson's six volumes to the two or three page summary prefixed to almost every edition of any one of the poet's works. However, there need not be, I believe, any justification for including in this volume four seventeenth-century accounts of Milton's life. These, with certain autobiographic passages from Milton's writings, have been the source of all later biographies, and yet it is very difficult for the student himself to use these sources, because the books are long ago out of print and practically unobtainable. Most good libraries have single copies, but numbers of students cannot to any advantage work with one book.

I regret that the size of this volume does not permit me to include also the longest and most important of the autobiographic passages from Milton's prose writings. This is

the consecutive account of his life up to 1654, which forms a part of *The Second Defence of the People of England*. He penned this clear statement regarding his parentage, boyhood, and early manhood to answer the attacks of a scurrilous enemy, who sought to slander his character; he wrote, as he says, to prove that he never "disgraced beauty of sentiment by deformity of conduct, or the maxims of a freeman by the actions of a slave."[1] For the century in which he lived the account is fairly intimate and revealing. It covers little more than the first half of his life, but it is fuller in detail than the four I have included, and what is of most significance, it discloses more clearly than they the purposes and motives leading to decision and action. For practical reasons, however, the inclusion of this story of Milton's life is less important than is that of any one of the other four, because Milton's autobiography is easily obtainable in many old editions of his prose works, and in the excellent modern edition of the Bohn Library.

These four stories were written by men contemporary with the poet. As Wood draws liberally from the data given by the author of Biography I, and indeed often employs his exact phrasing, we know this first account must have been written between 1674, the date of Milton's death, and 1691, the year Wood published his *Athenæ Oxonienses*. Aubrey compiled his notes in 1681, and Philips's account was published in 1694. They give, then, the impression he made upon those about him as he lived and acted. They are, moreover, from very different points of view, and by men with very different qualifications for the task of biographer. Philips wrote to present to the public the life of the uncle whom he honored, to whom he was indebted for his high mental and moral training, but somewhat influenced, we cannot help feeling, by a keen sense of family pride; the author of Biography I, less learned and less skilful with his pen than Philips, seems to have written out of full sympathy for a man whom he greatly admired, and whom he considered it well-nigh his duty to hold up as a model of noble purpose and lofty

[1] *P. W.* I, 254.

attainment; Aubrey was merely the writer of lives of literary men, and he took notes quite impartially and without prejudice; Wood was a royalist, and rumor many times accused him of being at heart a Catholic. However that may be, he certainly dealt sternly with those who had least love for Catholicism. He regarded Milton, therefore, as a man seeking by reprehensible means to overthrow his cherished form of government, and to bring reproach upon a religion he honored; as a man of great mental power, but of very questionable principles. The truth lies somewhere among these various accounts, and the search for the truth is ever the delightful task of the student.

There is, in presenting these biographies, necessarily a good deal of repetition of fact, but the very vital estimates of character and work could not be given without printing the lives as a whole. These stories do not, however, always agree in their statements of fact, and the explanation of this disagreement is, again, a problem for the truth seeker.

III

Milton was, for several reasons, especially fitted to speak upon the subject of education. He was himself one of the best educated men of his day. He had had, as a student in preparatory school and college, practical acquaintance with the English system from St. Paul's through the university even to the Master's degree; he knew by experience the methods of the English schools, and what they were trying to accomplish. And the more he saw, the more he found to criticize in the training of the youth of his country. Again, he himself had been for about five years a teacher of boys, and had, we are sure, undertaken to experiment toward a better form of education than that which he had received. Besides, he had studied the history of education and the theories of the ancients and moderns wherever he might find them set forth with any originality or power. He was possessed, then, of theory, practice, and experience. These, joined with breadth of view and independence of judgment, qualified him, perhaps better

than any other Englishman of his time, to outline the argument imposed upon him by Hartlib. This pamphlet, therefore, embodies the results of years of meditation upon the value of right mental and moral training, and upon the surest means of obtaining real and lasting results; but it grew into a definite plan under the stimulus of discussion with another mind; and it was written down because Hartlib pressed upon him the public need and the possible opportunity of starting a reform. Milton had taken up the prose pen in the cause of reform, and he would not neglect this occasion.

Everybody knew Hartlib,[1] and everybody seems to have respected him. He was a man who actually accomplished little himself, but who made it his business to keep the public interested in those who had thought out definite social reforms, and were eager to have them accepted. He was concerned for all that promised good to the whole community, and ready to sacrifice time, energy, and money to aid in bettering the social life of England. We are now familiar with this type, but such a man was, in the seventeenth century, extremely rare; indeed Hartlib is almost the first of the "friends of progress." He was, moreover, interesting for his wide acquaintance and correspondence with the most noted men of his time in all the countries of Europe. Few men, not holding high government positions, have been in touch with so many prominent thinkers and workers of their age. He acted for them as news-agent and literary critic, sending them by letter an account of what was taking place in literary circles and in the world of affairs. His letters to Doctor John Worthington are entertaining reading to-day; there is a delightful mixture of news about men and nations, of criticism of books fresh from the press, reports of those soon to appear, of gossip about ghosts recently seen, of requests for medical prescriptions, of accounts of the fire, and of many other things which bring him and his life before the reader. This reporter's work he did partly as a means of earning a livelihood; partly because he loved the sense of being in

[1] Masson, III, 193.

touch with both the thinker and the actor, the one who wanted to know and the one who was seeking to shape the current of national and artistic life; and lastly because writing letters of news and criticism gave him an opportunity to forward his pet hobbies.

Chief among these hobbies was the cause of John Durie, whose great scheme for the good of mankind was a reconciliation of Calvinists and Lutherans, and a union of all the protestant churches of Europe. Later, he ardently espoused and preached the cause of Comenius, the famous educational reformer of Moravia. Indeed, the great plan of Comenius seems to have been brought before the English public chiefly by Hartlib, whom Comenius calls "the most intimate of my friends."[1] The third cause promoted by Hartlib was a reform in the methods of agriculture, and on this subject he wrote the larger number of his pamphlets.

When Milton and Hartlib became friends is not known. They lived for a time in the same street; both were much in the public eye, and concerned about some of the same questions of reform. Hence acquaintance and friendship might easily arise. Probably Hartlib tried to convert Milton to the educational ideas of Comenius, and, Milton not agreeing with him, many arguments ensued; until at last Hartlib begged to have Milton's views of education written down as an organized scheme.

The questions discussed in the pamphlet have, after almost three centuries, by no means been satisfactorily settled; we still complain that too much time is wasted on useless subjects; that words instead of things are taught; and not even yet do we always proceed from the easy to the more difficult. We horde our students together in such numbers that the individual receives little personal guidance, and seldom has the stimulating experience of intellectual intercourse with his instructor; and we very rarely, if ever, so apportion the hours of the day that the physical, mental, and moral shall each have its due share of training. We are still seeking the right way of teaching our youth to be brave

[1] Masson, III, 202.

men and women, and worthy patriots, dear to God, and famous to all ages.

In the light of our failures, Milton's discussion of the principles and methods of a sound education are now, as then, worthy of careful study.

IV

Milton has briefly sketched, in the *Areopagitica*, the history of press censorship outside of his own country. In England, the earliest crusades were directed against books of a religious character, as was that in 1400 which prohibited any book contrary to the Catholic faith. Not until the reign of Mary were political books banned, and after that the formula ran "books filled with heresy, sedition, and treason." There was much restraint of printing, but perhaps in a less organized and exacting form than on the Continent. This was largely because the Inquisition never gained power in England. At the separation of the church from Rome, the censorship of the press passed to the crown, and the kings usually appointed their own censors. The Parliament concerned itself little with this matter. Cases of trial and punishment came before the Court of Star Chamber. Selden said in 1629, "There is no law to prevent the printing of any book in England, but only a decree of the Star Chamber"; and Milton concludes, "nor by any statute left us by our ancestors."[1]

The punishment of offenders — always those who had written slander of king, church, or state — had, indeed, rested with this court, or had been the personal concern of the monarch. Elizabeth, for example, seldom exercised direct censorship, but constantly thwarted the press; she forbade the importation of foreign books, and any English author had, in writing of nation or church, to take his chances of arousing her ire. This rather uncertain and spasmodic supervision could not, however, continue, as books multiplied and the knowledge of their capacity for causing harm increased. Hence in 1637 the famous decree of the Star Chamber was passed. It begins: —

[1] See p. 58.

In Camera Stellata coram Concilio ibidem, vndecimo die Iulii, *Anno decimo tertio* CAROLI Regis

Imprimis, That no person or persons whatsoever shall presume to print, or cause to bee printed, either in the parts beyond the Seas, or in this Realme, or other his Maiesties Dominions, any seditious, scismaticall, or offensive Bookes or Pamphlets, to the scandall of Religion, or the Church, or the Government, or Governours of the Church or State, or Commonwealth, or of any Corporation, or particular person or persons whatsoeuer, nor shall import any such Booke or Bookes, nor sell or dispose of them, or any of them, nor cause any such to be bound, stitched, or sowed, vpon paine that he or they so offending, shall loose all such Bookes and Pamphlets, and also haue, and suffer such correction, and severe punishment, either by Fine, imprisonment, or other corporall punishment, or otherwise, as by this Court, or by His Maiesties Commissioners for causes Ecclesiasticall in the high Commission Court, respectiuely, as the several courses shall require, shall be thought fit to be inflicted upon him, or them, for such their offence and contempt.

II. *Item*, That no person or persons whatsoeuer, shall at any time print, or cause to be imprinted, any Booke or Pamphlet whatsoever vnlesse the same Booke or Pamphlet, and also all and euery the Titles, Epistles, Prefaces, Proems, Preambles, Introductions, Tables, Dedications, and other matters and things whatsoeuer thereunto annexed, or therewith imprinted, shall be first lawfully licenced and authorized onely by such person and persons as are hereafter expressed, and by no other, and shall be also first entred into the Registers Booke of the Company of Stationers; vpon paine that every Printer offending therein, shall be for euer hereafter disabled to use or exercise the Art or Mysterie of Printing, and receiue such further punishment, as by this Court or the high Commission Court respectiuely, as the severall causes shall require, shall be thought fitting.

It further proceeds to declare, among other things, that all imported books must be examined; that all authors must affix their names to their books; that no one except the Stationers' Company may sell books in London, and each member of this Company must have passed a seven years' apprenticeship; that there may be twenty printers in London and no more, and the number of presses and apprentices each of these may have is specified; that there may be only four founders who are permitted to make type, with the number of apprentices allowed to each. This rigid super-

vision and this surrender of the whole occupation into the hands of the Stationers, shows how the rulers considered public danger to lie in the business of book-making.

But when the Star Chamber ceased to overawe the people, these strict regulations could no longer hold men in silence. "From the beginning of the Long Parliament, as we know sufficiently by this time, there had been a relaxation, or rather a total break-down, of the former laws for the regulation of the Press. In the newly-found liberty of the nation to think and to speak, all bonds of censorship were burst, and books of all kinds, but especially pamphlets on the current questions, were sent forth by their authors very much at their own discretion." [1] But the flood of pro-royalist pamphlets made the Parliament also fearful of books, and, during 1641 and 1642, there occur several orders on the Journals of the House, showing that the Commons warned the Stationers' Company to be increasingly vigilant about registering pamphlets. In January, 1642, the printers were ordered to print no book without the name of the author, and in March, 1643, the House instructed the Committee for Examinations to search any suspected house for hidden presses, to seize the books and presses if such were found, and to commit the offenders to prison. Finally, the Parliament felt obliged further to protect itself and the public by passing, on June 14, 1643, the following order: —

An Order of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, for the Regulating of Printing, and for suppressing the great late abuses and frequent disorders in Printing many false, Scandalous, Seditious, Libellous, and unlicensed Pamphlets, to the great defamation of Religion and Government.

Also, authorizing the Masters & Wardens of the Company of *Stationers* to make diligent search, seize and carry away all such Books as they shall finde Printed, or reprinted by any man having no lawful interest in them, being entred into the Hall Book to any other man as his proper Copies.

Die Mercurii. 14 June. 1643. — *Ordered by the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament that this Order shall be forthwith printed and published.*—J. Brown Cler. Parliamentorum: Hen. Elsing Cler. De Com.

[1] Masson, III, 266.

Die Mercurii, 14 *Junii*. 1643.

Whereas divers good Orders have bin lately made by both Houses of Parliament, for suppressing the great late abuses and frequent disorders in Printing many false, forged, scandalous, seditious, libellous, and unlicensed Papers, Pamphlets, and Books to the great defamation of Religion and government. Which orders (notwithstanding the diligence of the Company of *Stationers*, to put them in full execution) having taken little or no effect: By reason the bill in preparation, for redresse of the said disorders, hath hitherto bin retarded through the present distractions, and very many, as well *Stationers* and *Printers*, as others of sundry other professions not free of the *Stationers* Company, have taken upon them to set up sundry private Printing Presses in corners, and to print, vend, publish and disperse Books, pamphlets and papers, in such multitudes, that no industry could be sufficient to discover or bring to punishment, all the severall abounding delinquents: And by reason that divers of the *Stationers* Company and others being Delinquents (contrary to former orders and the constant custome used among the said Company) have taken liberty to Print, Vend and publish, the most profitable vendible Copies of Books, belonging to the Company and other *Stationers*, especially of such Agents as are imployed in putting the said Orders in Execution, and that by way of revenge for giveing information against them to the Houses for their Delinquences in Printing, to the great prejudice of the said Company of *Stationers* and Agents, and to their discouragement in this publik service.

It is therefore Ordered by the Lords and Commons in *Parliament*, That no Order or Declaration of both, or either House of *Parliament* shall be printed by any, but by order of one or both the said Houses: Nor other Book, Pamphlet, paper, nor part of any such Book, Pamphlet, or paper, shall from henceforth be printed, bound, stitched or put to sale by any person or persons whatsoever, unlesse the same be first approved of and licensed under the hands of such person or persons as both, or either of the said Houses shall appoint for the licensing of the same, and entred in the Register Book of the Company of *Stationers*, according to Ancient custom, and the Printer thereof to put his name thereto. And that no person or persons shall hereafter print, or cause to be reprinted any Book, or Books or part of Book, or Books heretofore allowed of and granted to the said Company of *Stationers* for their relief and maintenance of their poore, without the licence or consent of the Master, Wardens, and Assistants of the said Company; Nor any Book or Books lawfully licenced and entred in the Register of the said Company for any particular member thereof, without the licence and consent of the owner or owners thereof.

Nor yet import any such Book or Books, or part of Book or Books formerly Printed here, from beyond the Seas, upon paine of forfeiting the same to the Owner, or Owners of the Copies of the said Books, and such further punishment as shall be thought fit.

Milton, at that time a loyal Parliamentarian, had so far paid no heed to ordinances. In defiance of this and previous orders he published, unlicensed and unregistered, his anti-Episcopal pamphlets. In August, 1643, appeared his *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* in the same unlawful manner. He did not, however, withhold his name; he was quite willing the public should know that he was the author who was thus issuing books in violation of law. On August 14, this divorce pamphlet was referred to in a sermon before the Houses of Parliament as follows: "A wicked book is abroad and uncensured, though deserving to be burnt, whose author hath been so impudent as to set his name to it and dedicate it to yourselves." [1] On August 24, doubtless as the result of this sermon, there was a petition to Parliament by the Stationers relating to this illegal issuing of pamphlets, and consequently, the Commons appointed additional members to the Committee of Printing, with the charge to investigate this matter and to revise the Ordinance of 1643. The Committee did nothing with Milton for his illegal acts, but the danger aroused him to wage battle against the iniquity of checking the freedom of printing, and it was probably at this time that the *Areopagitica* was begun. On December 28, the wardens of the Stationers' Company again appeared before the Commons, "and further complained of the frequent printing of scandalous Books by divers, as Hezekiah Woodward and Jo. Milton." [2] But once more Milton was allowed to go unpunished.

His works did not, however, always escape the licenser and the executioner. There is a tradition that *Paradise Lost* barely escaped, because lines 594–99 of book I appeared to Thomas Tomkyns, the licenser, imaginary treason. And in August, 1660, a royal proclamation was

[1] Masson, III, 263. [2] Masson, III, 293.

printed in the London newspapers to the effect that all copies of John Milton's *Eikonoclastes* and *Defence of the English People* were to be delivered to the public officers, and these officers were to see that the books were burned by the common hangman; and that no man hereafter was to "presume to print, sell, or disperse any of the aforesaid Books." [1] Curiously enough, Milton was himself, in 1648–49, asked to take a hand at licensing,[2] and according to his own statements there were, indeed, certain classes of books he would have enjoyed suppressing.[3]

Such was Milton's connection with the press. The attempts to silence him, the bitter attacks upon his morality and integrity for his words regarding freedom in church and home, aroused in him a flaming indignation and a passion for a third form of freedom. He says he wrote his *Areopagitica* "to deliver the press from the restraints with which it was encumbered"; [4] and certainly the dignity, breadth, and fervor of the argument show clearly that, however strong may have been his feeling of personal injury, he had a purpose as far-reaching as this. The pamphlet undoubtedly influenced public opinion, but he himself was not to see any change in the attitude of the law-makers, for it took England fifty years longer to reach and accept Milton's point of view. It was not until 1694 that the Parliament refused to enact further laws restraining the freedom of the press, and that for which Milton so eloquently and so hopefully pleads was accomplished in England.

V

During the eighteen months from the passing of Cromwell to the writs for a new Parliament, the political curtain in England rises and falls so rapidly on the shifting scenes of government that it is with difficulty the onlooker can follow the evolution of the plot. The reader has constantly the giddy feeling of walking on the edge of a precipice. And this, indeed, was the condition of England and her

[1] Masson, VI, 182.
[2] See p. 90, n. 1.
[3] See p. 134.
[4] *P. W.* I. 259.

would-be rulers. Ruin was imminent, because of the selfishness of some, the disagreements of others, and the weakness of most.

Oliver Cromwell died September 3, 1658; Richard succeeded quietly and without opposition to the protectorship. On November 29 of the same year, it was voted in the Council of State to call a new Parliament. But before this body could meet, there had arisen about Richard two parties: the *Court Party*, which was loyal to the Protector, and wished to carry out as far as possible the policy his father Oliver had left; and the *Army Party*, which desired the army to be independent of the control of Richard, and its commander-in-chief to have coördinate power with that of the Protector. This demand Richard refused to countenance. The new Parliament, the members of which had been chosen on the old constituencies as they had existed under Charles I, and not on the reformed constituencies of Oliver Cromwell, met on January 27, 1659. It supported the action of Richard regarding the army. But the officers of the army, angered at the position taken by the House, held a convention in London, brought together their forces, and on April 22 compelled the dissolution of the Parliament. On May 25, Richard abdicated, but already on May 7, at the invitation of the army, forty-two members of the Rump Parliament, which had been dissolved by Cromwell on April 20, 1653, undertook to resume the power of governing. This restored Rump Parliament also failed to meet the demands of the army, and on October 13 it, too, was forcibly dissolved. On October 26, the authority of the state was vested in a Committee of Safety, a committee consisting of twenty-three persons chosen by the officers of the army. By December 15, this body had, in a measure, determined on a form of government, had proclaimed a new Parliament to meet in February, and had set about issuing the writs for an election. But Monk, who commanded the army in Scotland, did not support this Committee in its acts. The officers, moreover, could not agree in their demands for the army, and a second time, on December 26, the Rump Parliament was

recalled and reinstated by the army. On February 3, 1660, Monk with his forces marched into London. The Rump had been debating the question of the future of the governing body, and had finally come to the conclusion to continue sitting itself, but to enlarge itself by an election according to the writs issued in 1653. This plan, however, did not meet the wishes of the City of London, and Monk compelled the Rump on February 21, to recall the Presbyterian members shut out of the House by Colonel Pride's Purge on December 6, 1648. The Parliament was now, therefore, the re-collected Long Parliament, which had first assembled on November 3, 1640. Monk remained at hand with the army to see that the members carried out their promise to him, that they would do their work speedily and then disband. The Long Parliament, accordingly, having issued writs for a new, "full and free" Parliament, dissolved itself on March 16, 1660.

Milton published his *Commonwealth* at the end of February or the beginning of March, after the excluded members had been recalled, and the Parliament had become once more the body in which he had formerly expressed such faith and pride. With this first edition he sent the letter to Monk, doubtless merely to call the General's attention to the tract, which might otherwise have escaped his notice. A month later Milton had revised his pamphlet, had stricken out certain references to religion, had changed many places and added several sentences; the changes and additions being chiefly to focus the mind of the reader on the evils of kingship, and the dangers to the nation that lay in recalling the Stuarts. He published the second edition some time in April, after he felt reasonably certain a new Parliament would at last be elected. Every act of the House after February 21 had prepared the way for the return to kingship, and would make it easy, if the new Parliament should so vote, to recall Charles.

Milton still nominally held his secretaryship, and was carefully informed of what was taking place. Then why did he write the *Commonwealth?* Doubtless for the same reason that the standard-bearer sometimes rushes forward

and plants the colors in the very face of the advancing enemy, although he knows his own forces are in full retreat. Milton had only the faintest shadow of a hope that he would win any one to accept or further his plan, but he would at least show his own unabated loyalty to the good, old cause of a republican form of government.

The pamphlet proposes an impossible republic, which is, indeed, hardly a republic at all, since at the centre of the whole stands an assembly chosen by a few voters and holding office for life, with no possible check on its acts. Milton was a democrat in theory, but in temperament and feeling a firm adherent to an aristocracy of intellect and morals. His twenty years of public service had weakened his faith in men, and increased his belief that only the best few should be intrusted with power. His experience had led him to long above everything for a settled state of the kingdom. So great was his distrust and longing, that he would allow office to only the wisest and most upright; and, having found them, he would keep them without change in the place of supreme authority. As a possible corrective for what he saw clearly to be the weakness of his scheme for a republic, he enthusiastically proposes, on the one side, local self-government; and on the other side hesitatingly and grudgingly offers rotation in office. The separate ideas of the pamphlet were not original with Milton, but he combined them in a new way and presented a scheme novel as a whole.

The publication of the *Commonwealth* was the most daring thing Milton had ever done; in all his free speaking he had never so put his life in jeopardy. Charles was at this very time making his preliminary arrangements for a return to power, yet Milton publicly portrays with great vividness the iniquity of his house, the evils his father had brought on England, and the cruelty, debauchery, and suffering which the country may expect on the return of the Stuarts. Why Milton was exempted from death when the list for execution was made up by the Parliament at the request of the King, remains a mystery never satisfactorily explained. Every one expected him to

be hanged, but his name not once appears in any of the catalogues of proscribed persons.

The pamphlet created a greater sensation than anything he had before written, — not even excepting the *Defence of the English People.* This is evidenced by the number of replies that soon appeared in the book-stalls, some bitterly abusive, some humorous, and others serious in tone. On March 17, Milton is characterized in a printed pamphlet as follows: "An ingenious person hath observed that Scott is the Rump's man Thomas. . . . But John Milton is their goose-quill champion; who had need of a help-meet to establish anything, for he has a ram's head and is good only at batteries, — an old heretic both in religion and manners, that by his will would shake off his governors as he doth his wives, four in a fortnight. The sunbeams of his scandalous papers against the late King's Book is [*sic*] the parent that begot his late *New Commonwealth;* and, because he, like a parasite as he is, by flattering the then tyrannical power, hath run himself into the briers, the man will be angry if the rest of the nation will not bear him company, and suffer themselves to be decoyed into the same condition. He is so much of an enemy to usual practices that I believe, when he is condemned to travel to Tyburn in a cart, he will petition for the favor to be the first man that ever was driven thither in a wheelbarrow."[1] This was the most common opinion; that any man who was so foolish as, at this time, to express publicly such plans and sentiments as Milton had published, was merely ridiculous, and should be made the butt of the wits, until the law brought him to his deserved punishment. Because of the writing of this pamphlet, Masson thinks, he lost his secretaryship, and doubtless it was chiefly for this reason that he had to spend three months in hiding.[2]

[1] Masson, v, 659.

[2] See p. lxxxvi.

BIOGRAPHIES OF MILTON

I

The Earliest Life of Milton.[1]

To write the lives of single persons is then a commendable undertaking, when by it some moral benefit is designed to mankind. He who has that in aim, will not employ his time or pen to record the history of bad men, how successful or great soever they may have been; unless by relating their tragical ends (which, through the just judgment of the Almighty, most commonly overtakes them) or by discriminating, with a due note of infamy, whatever is criminal in their actions, he warn the reader to flee their example.

But to celebrate, whether the gifts or graces, the natural endowments, or acquired laudable habits of persons eminent in their generations, while it gives glory to God, the bestower of all good things, and (by furnishing a model) tends to the edification of our brethren, is little less than the duty of every Christian; which seems acknowledged by the late supervisors of our Common Prayer[2] when they added to the Collect for the church militant, a clause commemorating the *Saints and Servants of God departed this life in his Fear.*

That he who is the subject of this discourse, made it his endeavor to be thought worthy of that high character, will, I make no doubt, appear to the impartial reader from the particulars, which I shall with all sincerity relate of his life and works.

The learned Mr. John Milton, born about the year sixteen hundred and eight, is said to be descended from an

[1] This life of Milton was found in 1889 by Rev. Andrew Clark, LL.D., in a volume of Anthony Wood's papers in the Bodleian Library. It was edited by Professor Edward Parsons, 1903.

[2] Revision of 1661–62.

ancient knightly family in Buckinghamshire, that gave name to the chief place of their abode. However that be, his father was entitled to a true nobility in the Apostle Paul's Heraldry; having been disinherited about the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign by his father a Romanist, who had an estate of five hundred pound a year at Stainton St. John in Oxfordshire, for reading the Bible. Upon this occasion he came young to London, and being taken care of by a relation of his, a scrivener, he became free of that profession; and was so prosperous in it, and the consorship of a prudent, virtuous wife, as to be able to breed up in a liberal manner, and provide a competency for two sons and a daughter. After which, out of a moderation not usual with such as have tasted the sweets of gain, and perhaps naturally inclined rather to a retired life by his addiction to music (for his skill in which he stands registered among the composers of his time), he gave over his trade, and went to live in the country.

This his eldest son had his institution to learning both under public and private masters; under whom, through the pregnancy of his parts and his indefatigable industry (sitting up constantly at his study till midnight), he profited exceedingly; and early in that time wrote several grave and religious poems, and paraphrased some of David's Psalms.

At about eighteen years of age he went to Christ's College in Cambridge; where for his diligent study, his performance of public exercises, and for choice verses, written on the occasions usually solemnized by the universities, as well for his virtuous and sober life, he was in high esteem with the best of his time.

After taking his degree of Master of Arts he left the university, and, having no design to take upon him any of the particular learned professions, applied himself for five years, at his father's house in the country, to the diligent reading of the best classic authors, both divine and human; sometimes repairing to London, from which he was not far distant, for learning music and the mathematics.

Being now become master of what useful knowledge

was to be had in books, and competently skilled amongst others, in the Italian language, he made choice of that country to travel into, in order to polish his conversation, and learn to know men. And having received instructions how to demean himself with that wise, observing nation, as well as how to shape his journey, from Sir Henry Wotton,[1] whose esteem of him appears in an elegant letter to him upon that subject, he took his way through France. In this kingdom, the manners and genius of which he had in no admiration, he made small stay, nor contracted any acquaintance; save that, with the recommendation of Lord Scudamore, our King's Ambassador at Paris, he waited on Hugo Grotius,[2] who was there under that character from the Crown of Sweden.

Hasting to Italy by the way of Nice, and passing through Genoa, Leghorn, and Pisa he arrived at Florence. Here he lived two months in familiar and elegant conversation with the choice wits of that city, and was admitted by them to their private academies; an economy much practised among the virtuosi of those parts, for the communication of polite literature, as well as for the cementing of friendships. The reputation he had with them they expressed in several commendatory verses, which are extant in his book of poems. From Florence he went to Rome, where, as in all places, he spent his time in the choicest company; and amongst others there, in that of Lucas Holstein.[3]

At Naples, which was his next remove, he became acquainted with Marquis Manso, a learned person, and so aged as to have been contemporary and intimate with Torquato Tasso, the famous Italian heroic. This noble-

[1] Sir Henry Wotton, 1568-1639, the English diplomatist and author, was Provost of Eton when he wrote the letter. It is quoted by Masson, I, 578-80.

[2] Hugo Grotius, 1583-1645, the Dutch jurist, statesman, and poet. His most famous work is *De Jure Belli et Pacis*; he wrote a Latin tragedy *Adamus Exul*, on the model of Seneca, which Milton undoubtedly knew before writing *Paradise Lost*. It was printed at Leyden in 1601.

[3] Lucas Holstein, 1596-1661, was born at Hamburg, but lived the most of his life at Rome. He was the secretary of Cardinal Barberini and one of the librarians of the Vatican, and was famous chiefly for his learning in Greek literature.

man obliged him by very particular civilities, accompanying him to see the rarities of the place, and paying him visits at his lodging; also sent him the testimony of a great esteem in this distich:

Ut Mens, Forma, Decor Facies, Mos, si Pietas sic,
Non Anglus, verum herclè Angelus ipse fores.

Yet excused himself at parting for not having been able to do him more honor by reason of his resolute owning his religion. This he did whensoever by any one's enquiry occasion was offered; not otherwise forward to enter upon discourses of that nature. Nor did he decline its defense in the like circumstances even in Rome itself on his return thither; though he had been advised by letters from some friends to Naples, that the English Jesuits designed to do him mischief on that account. Before his leaving Naples he returned the Marquis an acknowledgment of his great favors in an elegant copy of verses entitled *Mansus*, which is extant amongst his other Latin poems.

From Rome he revisited Florence for the sake of his charming friends there; and then proceeded to Venice, where he shipped what books he had bought, and through the delicious country of Lombardy, and over the Alps to Geneva, where he lived in familiar conversation with the famous Diodati.[1] Thence through France he returned home, having, with no ill management of his time, spent about fifteen months abroad.

He had by this time laid in a large stock of knowledge, which as he designed not for the purchase of wealth, so neither intended he it, as a miser's hoard, to lie useless. Having therefore taken a house, to be at full ease and quiet, and gotten his books about him, he set himself upon compositions, tending either to the public benefit of mankind, and especially his countrymen, or to the advancement of the Commonwealth of Learning. And his first labors were very happily dedicated to what had the

[1] John Diodati, 1576–1649, a Swiss Protestant theologian; he translated the Bible into Italian in 1607.

chiefest place in his affections, and had been no small part of his study, the service of religion.

It was now the year 1640, and the nation was much divided upon the controversies about church government, between the Prelatical party, and the Dissenters, or, as they were commonly then called, Puritans. He had studied religion in the Bible and the best authors, had strictly lived up to its rules, and had no temporal concern depending upon any hierarchy to render him suspected, either to himself or others, as one that writ for interest; and, therefore, with great boldness and zeal offered his judgment, first in two *Books of Reformation* by way of address to a friend, and then, in answer to a bishop, he writ of *Prelatical Episcopacy* and *The Reason of Church Government.* After that, *Animadversions upon the Remonstrants defence* (the work of Bishop Hall) *against Smectymnuus* and *Apology for those Animadversions.*

In this while, his manner of settlement fitting him for the reception of a wife, he in a month's time (according to his practice of not wasting that precious talent) courted, married, and brought home from Forresthall,[1] near Oxford, a daughter of Mr. Powell. But she, that was very young, and had been bred in a family of plenty and freedom, being not well pleased with his reserved manner of life, within a few days left him, and went back into the country with her mother. Nor though he sent several pressing invitations could he prevail with her to return, till about four years after, when Oxford was surrendered (the nighness of her father's house to that garrison having for the most part of the meantime hindered any communication between them), she of her own accord came, and submitted to him, pleading that her mother had been the inciter of her to that frowardness. He, in the interval, who had entered into that state for the end designed by God and nature, and was then in the full vigor of his

[1] "An error for Forest-*hill;* a mistake, as Mr. F. Madan of the Bodleian Library suggests, not likely to have been made by an Oxford man."—E. P.

manhood, could ill bear the disappointment he met with by her obstinate absenting; and, therefore, thought upon a divorce, that he might be free to marry another; concerning which he also was in treaty. The lawfulness and expedience of this, duly regulate in order to all those purposes for which marriage was at first instituted, had upon full consideration and reading good authors been formerly his opinion; and the necessity of justifying himself now concurring with the opportunity, acceptable to him, of instructing others in a point of so great concern to the peace and preservation of families, and so likely to prevent temptations as well as mischiefs, he first writ *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, then *Colasterion*, and after *Tetrachordon*. In these he taught the right use and design of marriage; then the original and practice of divorces amongst the Jews, and showed that our Saviour, in those four places of the Evangelists,[1] meant not the abrogating but rectifying the abuses of it; rendering to that purpose another sense of the word fornication (and which is also the opinion amongst others of Mr. Selden in his *Uxor Hebraea*) than what is commonly received. Martin Bucer's *Judgment* in this matter he likewise translated into English. The Assembly of Divines then sitting at Westminster, though formerly obliged by his learned pen in the defense of Smectymnuus, and other their controversies with the bishops, now impatient of having the clergies' jurisdiction, as they reckoned it, invaded, instead of answering, or disproving what those books had asserted, caused him to be summoned for them before the Lords. But that house, whether approving the doctrine, or not favoring his accusers, soon dismissed him.

This was the mending of a decay in the superstructure, and had for object only the well-being of private persons, or at most of families. His small treatise *of Education*, addressed to Mr. Hartlib, was the laying a foundation also

[1] "It is not likely that a clergyman would be ignorant that three of the 'four places' were outside the Evangelists. Milton discusses (1) Genesis I, 27, 28, with II, 18, 23, 24; (2) Deut. XXIV, 1, 2; (3) Matt. V, 31, 32, with XIX, 3-11; (4) 1 Cor. VII, 10-16." — E. P.

of public weal. In it he prescribed an easy and delightful method for training up gentry in such a manner to all sorts of literature, as that they might at the same time by like degrees advance in virtue and abilities to serve their country, subjoining directions for their attaining other necessary or ornamental accomplishments; and it seemed he designed in some measure to put this in practise. He had, from his first settling, taken care of instructing his two nephews by his sister Phillips, and, as it happened, the son of some friend. Now he took a large house, where the Earle of Barrimore, sent by his aunt the Lady Ranalagh,[1] Sir Thomas Gardiner of Essex, and others were under his tuition. But whether it were that the tempers of our gentry would not bear the strictness of his discipline, or for what other reason, he continued that course but a while.

His next public work, and which seemed to be his particular province, who was so jealous in promoting knowledge, was *Areopagitica*, written in manner of an oration, to vindicate the freedom of the press from the tyranny of licensers; who either enslaved to the dictates of those that put them into office, or prejudiced by their own ignorance, are wont to hinder the coming out of any thing which is not consonant to the common received opinions, and by that means deprive the public of the benefit of many useful labors.

Hitherto all his writings had for subject the propagation of religion or learning, or the bettering some more private concerns of mankind. In political matters he had published nothing. And it was now the time of the King's coming upon his trial, when some of the Presbyterian ministers, out of malignity to the Independent party, who had supplanted them, more than from any principles of loyalty, asserted clamorously in their sermons and writings the privilege of kings from all accountableness. Or (to speak in the language of this[2] time) non-resistance and

[1] Lady Ranalagh was the sister of Robert Boyle, the chemist, and was noted for her "vast reach both of knowledge and apprehension." See Masson, III, 659.

[2] "Wood changes the word 'this' to 'that,' perhaps because the doctrine became antiquated with the Revolution of 1688. The manuscript is

passive obedience to be the doctrine of all the Reformed Churches. This general thesis, which encouraged all manner of tyranny, he opposed by good arguments, and the authorities of several eminently learned protestants in a book titled *The Tenure of Kings*, but without any particular application to the dispute then on foot in this nation.

Upon the change of government which succeeded the King's death he was, without any seeking of his, by the means of a private acquaintance, who was a member of the new Council of State, chosen Latin Secretary. In this public station his abilities and the acuteness of his parts, which had lain hid in his privacy, were soon taken notice of, and he was pitched upon to elude the artifice of Εἰκὼν Βασιλική. This he had no sooner performed answerably to the expectation from his wit and pen, in Εἰκονοκλάστης, but another adventure expected him.

Salmasius, a professor in Holland, who had in a large treatise, not long before, maintained the parity of church governors against Episcopacy, put out *Defensio Caroli Regis*, and in it, amongst other absurdities, justified (as indeed it was unavoidable in the defense of that cause, which was styled *Bellum Episcopale*) to the contradiction of his former book, the pretensions of the bishops. Him Mr. Milton, by the order of his masters, answered in *Defensio pro populo Anglicano*, both in more correct Latin, to the shame of the other's grammarship, and by much better reasoning. For Salmasius being a foreigner, and grossly ignorant of our laws and constitution (which in all nations are the respective distinguishing principles of government), either brought no arguments from thence, or such only (and by him not seldom mistaken or misapplied) as were partially suggested to him by those whose cause he had undertaken; and which, having during the many years of our divisions been often ventilated, received an easy solution. Nor had he given proof of deeper learning

certainly accurate for the time it is written, as the doctrine was most prominent during the latter part of the reign of Charles II and during the reign of James II." — E. P.

in that which is properly called politics, while he made use of trite instances, as that of the government of bees, and such like to prove the preëminency of monarchy; and all along so confounded it with tyranny (as also he did the Episcopal with the Papal government), that he might better have passed for a defender of the grand Signor, and the Council of Trent, than of a lawful king and a reformed church. For this and reneging[1] his former principles he was by Mr. Milton facetiously exposed; nor did he ever reply, though he lived three years after.[2]

But what he wisely declined, the further provoking such an adversary, or persisting to defend a cause he so ill understood, was attempted in *Clamor Regii Sanguinis*, etc., in which Salmasius was hugely extolled, and Mr. Milton as falsely defamed. The anonymous author,[3] Mr. Milton, who had by his last book gained great esteem and many friends among the learned abroad, by whom, and by the public ministers coming hither he was often visited, soon discovered to be Morus, formerly a professor and minister at Geneva, then living in Holland. Him, in *Secunda Defensio pro populo Anglicano*, he rendered ridiculous for his trivial and weak treatise under so tragical a title, containing little of argument, which had not before suffered with Salmasius. And because it consisted most of railing and false reproaches, he, in no unpleasant manner, from very good testimonies retorted upon him the true history of his notorious impurities, both at Geneva and Leyden. Himself he also, by giving a particular ingenuous account of his whole life, vindicated from those scurrilous aspersions, with which that book had endeavored to blemish him; adding perhaps thereby also reputation to the cause he defended, at

[1] Reneging: denying.

[2] "A posthumous reply by Salmasius appeared in 1660, seven years after his death." — E. P.

[3] This pamphlet was written by Peter du Moulin, Rector of Wheldrake, a stanch royalist; but his authorship was not known until 1670 (see Masson, v, 215-25). Alexander More, Professor of Sacred History at Amsterdam, wrote a dedicatory epistle to the book, edited it, and was active in furthering its sale. Milton, on the best authority, believed More to be the author, and hence answered his charges. See an abstract of the book in Masson, IV, 453-58.

least with impartial readers, when they should reflect upon the different qualifications of the respective champions. And when Morus afterwards strove to clear himself of being the author,[1] and to represent Mr. Milton as an injurious defamer in that particular, he in *Defensio pro se* by very good testimonies, and other circumstantial proofs justified his having fixed it there, and made good sport of the other's shallow evasions.

While he was thus employed his eyesight totally failed him; not through any immediate or sudden judgment, as his adversaries insultingly affirmed, but from a weakness which his hard, nightly study in his youth had first occasioned, and which by degrees had for some time before deprived him of the use of one eye. And the issues and seatons, made use of to save or retrieve that, were thought by drawing away the spirits, which should have supplied the optic vessels, to have hastened the loss of the other. He was, indeed, advised by his physicians of the danger, in his condition, attending so great intentness as that work required. But he, who was resolute in going through with what upon good consideration he at any time designed, and to whom the love of truth and his country was dearer then all things, would not for any danger decline their defense.

Nor did his darkness discourage or disable him from prosecuting, with the help of amanuenses, the former design of his calmer studies. And he had now more leisure, being dispensed with by having a substitute allowed him, and sometimes instructions sent home to him, from attending in his office of secretary.

It was now that he began that laborious work of amassing out of all the classic authors, both in prose and verse, a *Latin Thesaurus* to the emendation of that done by Stephanus; also the composing *Paradise Lost*, and the framing a body of divinity out of the Bible. All which, notwithstanding the several calamities befalling him in his fortunes, he finished after the Restoration: a~ also the *British History* down to the Conquest, *Paradise Regained*, *Samson*

[1] This sentence was either written before 1670, or the writer had not seen the book in which Du Moulin acknowledged the authorship.

Agonistes, a tragedy, *Logica and Accedence, commenced Grammar* and had begun a *Greek Thesaurus;* having scarce left any part of learning unimproved by him, as in *Paradise Lost* and *Regained* he more especially taught all virtue.

In these works, and the instruction of some youth or other at the intreaty of his friends, he in great serenity spent his time and expired no less calmly in the year 1674.

He had naturally a sharp wit, and steady judgment; which helps toward attaining learning he improved by an indefatigable attention to his study; and was supported in that by a temperance, always observed by him, but in his youth even with great nicety. Yet did he not reckon this talent but as entrusted with him; and therefore dedicated all his labors to the glory of God and some public good; neither binding himself to any of the gainful professions, nor having any worldly interest for aim in what he taught. He made no address or court for that employment of Latin secretary, though his eminent fitness for it appears by his printed letters of that time.[1] And he was far from being concerned in the corrupt designs of his masters,[2] that whilst in his first and second *Defensio pro populo Anglicano* he was an advocate for liberty against tyranny and oppression (which to him seemed the case, as well by the public declarations on the one side [and he was a stranger to their private counsels[3]], as by the arguments on the other side, which run mainly upon the justifying of exorbitant and lawless power), he took care all along strictly to define and persuade to true liberty, and especially in very solemn perorations at the close of those books; where he also, little less than prophetically,

[1] "Probably a reference to a pirated edition of Milton's *State Letters*, printed in 1676; or perhaps to the volume of Familiar Letters (*Epistolarum Familiarum Liber Unus*), printed in 1674." — E. P.

[2] "There is evident sympathy here with the attitude which Milton took towards the puritan government in its later days, with the mood in which he wrote *A Ready and Easy Way to establish a Free Commonwealth*." — E. P.

[3] "An explicit statement of Milton's exclusion from the inner circle of the puritan government." — E. P.

denounced the punishments due to the abusers of that specious name. And as he was not linked to one party by self interest, so neither was he divided from the other by animosity; but was forward to do any of them good offices, when their particular cases afforded him ground to appear on their behalf. And especially, if on the score of wit or learning, they could lay claim to his peculiar patronage. Of which were instances, among others the grandchild of the famous Spencer,[1] a papist suffering in his concerns in Ireland, and Sir William Davenant when taken prisoner,[2] for both whom he procured relief.

This his sincerity, and disentanglement of any private ends with his sentiments relating to the public, proceeded no doubt from a higher principle, but was in great part supported, and temptations to the contrary avoided by his constant frugality; which enabled him at first to live within compass of the moderate patrimony his father left him, and afterwards to bear with patience, and no discomposure of his way of living, the great losses which befell him in his fortunes. Yet he was not sparing to buy good books, of which he left a fair collection; and was generous in relieving the wants of his friends. Of his gentleness and humanity he likewise gave signal proof in receiving home, and living in good accord till her death with, his first wife, after she had so obstinately absented from him. During which time, as neither in any other scene of his life, was he blemished with the least unchastity.

From so Christian a life, so great learning, and so unbiassed a search after truth it is not probable any errors in doctrine should spring. And, therefore, his judgment in his

1 "A fact not mentioned elsewhere." — E. P.

2 "An interesting confirmation of the tradition related by Jonathan Richardson (*Explanatory Notes on "Paradise Lost,"* pp. lxxxix-xc). Richardson says he received the information from Thomas Betterton, through Alexander Pope, that at the Restoration, when Milton was in danger of losing his life, ''t was Sir William Davenant obtained his remission, in return for his own life procured by Milton's interest when himself was under condemnation, *anno* 1650. A life was owing to Milton (Davenant's), and 't was paid nobly, Milton's for Davenant's at Davenant's intercession.' "— E. P. This was Davenant, the poet and dramatist, 1605-68.

body of divinity concerning some speculative points, differing perhaps from that commonly received, (and which is thought to be the reason that never was printed) neither ought rashly to be condemned, and however himself not to be uncharitably censured; who, by being a constant champion for the liberty of opinion, expressed much candor towards others. But that this age is insensible of the great obligations it has to him, is too apparent in that he has no better a pen to celebrate his memory.

He was of a moderate stature, and well proportioned, of a ruddy complexion, light brown hair, and handsome features; save that his eyes were none of the quickest. But his blindness, which proceeded from a gutta serena,[1] added no further blemish to them. His deportment was sweet and affable; and his gate erect and manly, bespeaking courage and undauntedness (or a *nil conscire*), on which account he wore a sword while he had his sight, and was skilled in using it. He had an excellent ear, and could bear a part both in vocal and instrumental music. His moderate estate left him by his father was, through his good economy, sufficient to maintain him. Out of his secretary's salary he had saved two thousand pounds, which, being lodged in the excise, and that bank failing upon the Restoration, he utterly lost. Besides which, and the ceasing of his employment, he had no damage by that change of affairs. For he early sued out his pardon; and by means of that, when the Sergeant of the house of Commons had officiously seized him, was quickly set at liberty. He had, too, at the first return of the Court in good manners left his house in Petty France, which had a door into the park;[2] and in all other things demeaning himself peaceable, was so far from being reckoned disaffected, that he was visited at his house on Bunhill by a chief officer of state, and desired to employ his pen on their behalf. And when the subject of divorce was under consideration with the Lords, upon the account of the Lord

1 See *P. L.* III, 25.

2 "The omission of the name of the park suggests that the writer was a Londoner." — E. P.

Ross, he was consulted by an eminent member of that house. By the great fire in 1666 he had a house in Bread Street burnt, which was all the real estate he had.

He rendered his studies and various works more easy and pleasant by allotting them their several portions of the day. Of these the time friendly to the Muses fell to his poetry; and he, waking early, (as is the use of temperate men) had commonly a good stock of verses ready against his amanuensis came; which if it happened to be later then ordinary, he would complain, saying *he wanted to be milked.*[1] The evenings he likewise spent in reading some choice poets, by way of refreshment after the days toil, and to store his fancy against morning. Besides his ordinary lectures out of the Bible and the best commentators on the week day, that was his sole subject on Sundays. And David's Psalms were in esteem with him above all poetry. The youths that he instructed from time to time served him often as amanuenses, and some elderly persons were glad for the benefit of his learned conversation, to perform that office. His first wife died a while after his blindness seized him, leaving him three daughters, that lived to be women. He married two more, whereof one survived him. He died in a fit of the gout, but with so little pain or emotion, that the time of his expiring was not perceived by those in the room. And though he had been long troubled with that disease, insomuch that his knuckles were all callous, yet was he not ever observed to be very impatient. He had this elegy in common with the patriarchs and kings of Israel, that he was gathered to his people; for he happened to be buried in Cripplegate, where about thirty years before he had by chance also interred his father.

[1] "A remark of Milton not found elsewhere." —E. P.

II

COLLECTIONS FOR THE LIFE OF MILTON

BY JOHN AUBREY, F.R.S.

MR. JOHN MILTON

Was of an Oxfordshire family: his grandfather . . . [a Rom. Cath.] of Holten, in Oxfordshire, near Shotover. His father was brought up in the University of Oxon, at Christ Church, [his mother was a Bradshaw, Chpr. Milton (his brother, the Inner Temple) barrister], and his gr. father disinherited him because he kept not to the Catholic religion [He found a Bible, in English, in his chamber]; so thereupon he came to London, and became a scrivener (brought up by a friend of his, was not an apprentice). He was an ingenious man, delighted in music, composed many songs now in print, especially that of Oriana,[1] and got a plentiful estate by it, and left it off many years before he died.

His son John was born in Bread Street, in London, at the (Rose, *erased*,)[2] Spread Eagle, which was his house (he had also in that street another house, the Rose, and other houses in other places). He was borne *Anno Domini* . . . the . . . day of . . . about . . . a clock in the . . . He went to school to old Mr. Gill, at Paul's school; went, at his own charge only, to Christ College in Cambr. (very young, sc. about thirteen was the most, *erased*,) [at fifteen], where he stayed eight years at least; then he travelled into France and Italy. At Geneva he contracted a great friendship with the learned Dr. Deodati, of Geneva (*vide* his poems). [Had Sir H. Wotton's commendatory letters]. He was acquainted (beyond sea, *erased*,) with

[1] A book entitled *The Triumphs of Oriana*, composed of twenty-five madrigals in honor of Queen Elizabeth.

[2] Aubrey has cancelled in his MS. the words in parentheses followed by *erased*.

Sir Henry Wotton, who delighted in his company, Ambassador at Venice. He was several years [*qu.* How many? *Resp.* Two years] beyond sea, and returned to England just upon the breaking out of the civil wars. He was Latin Secretary to (Oliver Cr. *erased,*) the Parliament.

Anno Domini 1619 he was ten years old, as by his picture, and was then a poet. His school-master then was a Puritan, in Essex, who cut his hair short.

He married his first wife . . . Powell, of Fost-hill, at Shotover, in Oxonshire. She was a zealous royalist, and went without her husband's consent to her mother in the King's quarters. [She went from him to her mother's at . . . in the King's quarters, near Oxford.] She died *Anno Domini* . . .

Anno Domini . . . [*sic*] by whom he had 4 children. Hath two daughters living; Deborah was his amanuensis; he taught her Latin, and to read Greek (and Hebrew, qu. *erased,*) to him when he lost his eyesight, which was *Anno Domini* . . .

He was scarce so tall as I am [*Qu. quot* feet I am high? *Resp.* Of middle stature]. He had light brown [auburn] hair. His complexion exceeding fair [he was so fair that they called him the Lady of Christ College]. Oval face, his eye a dark gray. His widow has his picture drawn (very well and like) when a Cambridge scholar. She has his picture when a Cambridge scholar, which ought to be engraven; for the pictures before his books are not *at all* like him.

He married his 2d wife, Mistress Eliz. Minshull, *Anno* . . . (the year before the sickness), a gentle person, a peaceful and agreeable humor.

After he was blind, he wrote these following books, *viz.*

Paradise Lost,
Paradise Regained,
Grammar,
Dictionary, imperfect.

He was a spare man.

He was an early riser, *sc.* at 4 o'clock *manè*, yea, after he lost his sight. He had a man read to him. The

first thing he read was the Hebrew Bible, and that was at 4*h. manè* ½ *h.*[*sic*] + then he contemplated. At 7 his man came to him again, and then read to him and wrote till dinner; the writing was as much as the reading. His 2d daughter, Deborah, could read to him Latin, Ital. and French, and Greek. She married in Dublin to one Mr. Clarke (a mercer, sells silk); very like her father. The other sister is Mary, more like her mother. After dinner he used to walk 3 or 4 hours at a time (he always had a garden where he lived): went to bed about 9. Temperate, rarely drank between meals. Extreme pleasant in his conversation, and at dinner, supper, &c. but satirical.

He pronounced the letter R very hard [*Litera canina.* A certain sign of a satirical wit. From Jo. Dryden].

He had a delicate, tuneable voice, and had good skill. His father instructed him. He had an organ in his house; he played on that most. His exercise was chiefly walking.

He was visited much by learned, more than he did desire.

He was mightily importuned to go into Fr. and Italy (foreigners came much to see him), and much admired him, and offered to him great preferments to come over to them, and the only inducement of several foreigners that came over into England, was chiefly to see O. Protector, and Mr. J. Milton; and would see the *house and chamber* where *he* was born. He was much more admired abroad than at home.

His familiar learned acquaintance were Mr. Andrew Marvell, Mr. Skinner, Dr. Paget, M.D.[1]

Mr. Skinner, who was his disciple.

Jo. Dryden, Esq., Poet Laureate, who very much admired him, and went to him to have leave to put his Paradise Lost into a drama in rhyme. Mr. Milton received

[1] Andrew Marvell, 1621–78, the poet and satirist, was Milton's assistant in the Latin secretaryship from 1657–59.

Skinner: see *Sonnets*, 21, 22, and Masson, IV, 622–25.

Doctor Nathan Paget, a physician of some reputation in London, holding official positions under the Commonwealth. Masson, VI, 454–55.

him civilly, and told him he would give him leave to tag his verses.

His widow assures me that Mr. Hobbs was not one of his acquaintance, that her husband did not like him at all, but he would acknowledge him to be a man of great parts, and a learned man. Their interests and tenets were diametrically opposite [did run counter to each other.]

From his bro. Chr. Milton: —

When he went to school, when he was very young, he studied very hard, and sat up very late; commonly till 12 or one o'clock at night, and his father ordered the maid to sit up for him, and in those years (10) composed many copies of verses, which might well become a riper age. And was a very hard student in the university, and performed all his exercises there with very good applause. His 1st tutor there was Mr. Chapell, from whom receiving some unkindness [whipped him], he was afterwards (though it seemed opposite to the rules of the college), transferred to the tuition of one Mr. Tovell, who died parson of Lutterworth.

I have been told that the father composed a song of fourscore parts for the Landgrave of Hesse for which highness sent a medal of gold or a noble present. He died, (in that year that the army marched through the city, *erased*,) about 1647, buried in Cripplegate ch. from his house in the Barbican.

u. Mr. Chr. Milton to see the date of his bro. birth.

1. Of Reformation. / Against Prelatical Episcopacy. } *Qu.* whether two books.
2. The Reason of Church Government.
3. A Defence of Smectymnuus.
4. The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce.
5. *Colasterion.*
6. The Judgment of Martin Bucer.
7. *Tetrachordon* (of Divorce).

} All these in prosecution of the same subject. [4–7]

Areopagitica, viz., for the Liberty of the Press.

Of Education.

Iconoclastes.

Tenure of Kings and Magistrates.
Defensio Populi Anglicani.
Defensio Secunda contra Morum. His Logic.
Defensio Tertia.
Of the Power of the Civil Magistrate in Ecclesiastical Affairs.
Against Hirelings (against Tithes).
Of a Commonwealth.
Against Dr. Griffith.
Of Toleration, Heresy, and Schism.

He went to travel about the year 1638, and was abroad about a year's space, chiefly in Italy: immediately after his return he took a lodging at Mr. Russell's, a tailor, in St. Bride's Church-yard, and took into his tuition his sister's two sons, Edw. and John Philips, the first 10, the other 9 years of age; and in a year's time made them capable of interpreting a Latin author at sight, &c. and within 3 years they went through the best of Latin and Greek poets: Lucretius and Manilius (and with him the use of the globes, and some rudiments of arithm. and geom.) of the Latins; Hesiod, Aratus, Dionysius Afer, Oppian, *Apollonii Argonautica,* and Quintus Calaber. Cato, Varro, and *Columella de Re Rustica* were the very first authors they learned.[1]

As he was severe on one hand, so he was most familiar and free in his conversation to those to whom most sour in his way of education. N. B. He made his nephews songsters, and sing from the time they were with him.

John Milton was born the 9th of December, 1608, *die Veneris,* half an hour after 6 in the morning.

From Mr. E. Philips:—"His invention was much more free and easy in the equinoxes than in the solstices; as he more particularly found in writing his Paradise Lost. Mr. Edw. Philips (his nephew and then amanuensis hath, *erased.*") All the time of writing his Paradise Lost, his vein began at the autumnal equinoctial, and ceased at the vernal, or thereabouts (I believe about May), and this was

[1] Compare this list with that on p. lxv.

4 or 5 years of his doing it. He began about 2 years before the K. came in, and finished about 3 years after the K.'s restoration.

Qu. Mr. J. Playford *pro* Wilby's Set of Orianas.

In the (2nd or 3rd, *erased*,) [4th] book of Paradise Lost there are about 6 verses of Satan's exclamation to the sun, which Mr. E. Philips remembers about 15 or 16 years before ever his Poem was thought of; which verses were intended for the beginning of a tragedy, which he had designed, but was diverted from it by other business.

Whatever he wrote against monarchy was out of no animosity to the King's person, or out of any faction or interest, but out of a pure zeal to the liberty of mankind, which he thought would be greater under a free state than under a monarchial government. His being so conversant in Livy and the Roman authors, and the greatness he saw done by the Roman commonwealth, and the virtue of their great commanders [captains] induced him to.

His first wife (Mrs. Powell, a royalist) was brought up and lived where there was a great deal of company and merriment, dancing, &c. And when she came to live with her husband at Mr. Russell's, in St. Bride's ch. yard, she found it very solitary; no company came to her, oftentimes heard his nephews beaten and cry. This life was irksome to her, and so she went to her parents at Foste-hill. He sent for her (after some time), and I think his servant was evilly entreated, but as for wronging his bed, I never heard the least suspicions, nor had he of that any jealousy.

From Mr. Abr. Hill: — *Memorand.* His sharp writing against Alexander More, of Holland, upon a mistake notwithstanding he had given him by the ambassador [*Qu.* the ambassador's name of Mr. Hill? *Resp.* Newport, the Dutch ambassador] all satisfaction to the contrary: *viz.* that the book called "*Clamor*" was writ by Peter du Moulin.[1] Well, that was all one, he having writ it, it should go into the world; one of them was as bad as the other.

[1] See p. xxxi, n. 3.

Qu. Mr. Allam, of Edm. Hall, Oxon, of Mr. J. Milton's Life, writ by himself, *vid. pagg.*

His sight began to fail him at first upon his writing against Salmasius, and before 'twas fully completed, one eye absolutely failed. Upon the writing of other books after that, his other eye decayed.

Write his name in red letters on his picture with his widow to preserve.

("He married Eliz. 2d wife, *Anno Domini* 16 . . . *erased.*")

[Different rell.] Two opinions do not well on the same bolster. She was a . . . royalist, and went to her mother near Oxford [the K's quarters]. I have so much charity for her that she might not wrong his bed, but what man (especially contemplative) would like to have a young wife environed [and stormed] by the sons of Mars, and those of the enemy party.

He lived in several places, e. g. Holborn near K's gate. He died in Bunhill opposite the Artillery-gardenwall.

His harmonical and ingenious soul did lodge [dwelt] in a beautiful and well-proportioned body.

In toto nusquam corpore menda fuit.

Ovid.

He had (an extraordinary, *erased,*) a very good memory; but I believe that his excellent method of thinking and disposing did much help his memory.

I heard that after he was blind, that he was writing, in the heads, a [Latin] dictionary, *vidua affirmat.* She gave all his papers (among which this dictionary imperfect) to his nephew, that he brought up, a sister's son, . . . Philips, who lives near the Maypole in the Strand. She has a great many letters by her from learned men of his acquaintance, both of England, and beyond sea.

His eye-sight was decaying about 20 years before his death. *Qu.* when quite [stark] blind? His father read without spectacles at 84. His mother had very weak eyes, and used spectacles presently after she was thirty years old.

Of a very cheerful humor.

Seldom took any physic, only sometimes he took manna.

He was very healthy, and free from all diseases, only toward his later end, he was visited with the gout, spring and fall. He would be cheerful even in his gout-fits, and sing.

He died of (a fever at his house in Jewin Street about the 64th year of his age, *erased,*) the gout struck in, the 9th or 10th of November, 1674, as appears by his apothecary's book.

He lies buried in St. Giles, Cripplegate, [upper end of] chancel at the right hand. *Qu.* his (stone, grave-stone, *erased.*) *Mdm.* his stone is now removed; for about 2 years since (now 1681) the two steps to the communion-table were raised. I guess Jo. Speed and he lie together.

Qu. His nephew, Mr. Edw. Philips, for a perfect catalogue of his writings. *Mdm.* he wrote a little tract of *Education.*

Mdm. Mr. Theodore Haak, R.S.S. hath translated half his Paradise Lost into High Dutch, in such blank verse, which is very well liked of by Germans. Fabricius, professor at Heidelberg, who sent to Mr. Haak a letter upon this translation. *Incredible est quantum nos omnes affecerit gravitas styli, et copia lectissimorum verborum, et . . .*

III

A SELECTION FROM FASTI OXONIENSIS

BY ANTHONY WOOD, UNDER DATE OF 1635

This year was incorporated Master of Arts John Milton, not that it appears so in the register, for the reason I have told you in the incorporations, 1629,[1] but from his own

[1] Under this date Wood adds a note: "This year John French, M. A. and Fellow of Merton College, was elected Scribe or Registrary of the University, who being a careless man (though a good scholar) and

mouth to my friend,[1] who was well acquainted with, and had from him, and from his relations after his death, most of this account of his life and writings following. (1) That he was born in Breadstreet within the City of London, between six and seven o'clock in the morning of the ninth of Decemb. an. 1608. (2) That his father, John Milton, who was a scrivener living at the Spread Eagle in the said street, was a native of Halton in Oxfordshire, and his mother, named Sarah, was of the ancient family of the Bradshaws. (3) That his grandfather Milton, whose Christian name was John, as he thinks, was an under-ranger or keeper of the forest of Shotover, near to the said town of Halton, but descended from those of his name who have lived beyond all record at Milton near Halton and Thame in Oxfordshire. Which grandfather being a zealous papist, did put away, or, as some say, disinherit, his son, because he was a protestant, which made him retire to London, to seek, in a manner, his fortune. (4) That he, the said John Milton, the author, was educated mostly in Paul's School under Alex. Gill, senior, and thence at fifteen years of age was sent to Christ's Coll. in Cambridge, where he was put under the tuition of Will. Chappell, afterwards Bishop of Ross in Ireland; and there, as at school for three years before, 'twas usual with him to sit up till midnight at his book, which was the first thing that brought his eyes into the danger of blindness. By this his indefatigable study he profited exceedingly, wrote then several poems, paraphrased some of David's *Psalms*, performed the collegiate and academical exercise to the admiration of all, and was esteemed to be a virtuous and sober person, yet not to be ignorant of his own parts. (5) That after he had taken the degrees in Arts, he left the university of his own accord, and was not expelled for misdemeanors, as his adversaries have said. Whereupon, retiring to his

more fit for another, than that, employment, hath omitted throughout all his time the incorporations of the Cantabrigians." Then Wood gives the names of those he remembers.

[1] It is uncertain to whom he refers, possibly to Aubrey or to the writer of Biography II; note how he takes material from both these authors.

father's house in the country, he spent some time in turning over Latin and Greek authors, and now and then made excursions into the great city to buy books, to the end that he might be instructed in mathematics and music; in which last he became excellent, and by the help of his mathematics could compose a song or lesson. (6) That after five years being thus spent, and his mother (who was very charitable to the poor) dead, he did design to travel, so that obtaining the rudiments of the Ital. tongue, and instructions how to demean himself from Sir Htn. Wotton, who delighted in his company, and gave him letters of commendation to certain persons living at Venice, he travelled into Italy, an. 1638. (7) That in his way thither, he touched at Paris, where Joh. Scudamore, Viscount Slego, Ambassador from K. Ch. I. to the French King, received him kindly, and by his means became known to Hugo Grotius, then and there Ambassador from the Qu. of Sweden; but the manners and genius of that place being not agreeable to his mind, he soon left it. (8) That thence by Geneva and other places of note, he went into Italy, and through Leghorn, Pisa, &c. he went to Florence, where continuing two months, he became acquainted with several learned men, and familiar with the choicest wits of that great city, who introduced and admitted him into their private academies, whereby he saw and learned their fashions of literature. (9) That from thence he went to Siena and Rome, in both which places he spent his time among the most learned there, Lucas Holsteinius being one; and from thence he journeyed to Naples, where he was introduced into the acquaintance of Joh. Bapt. Mansus, an Italian Marquis (to whom Torquatus Tassus, an Italian poet, wrote his book *De Amicitia*) who showed great civilities to him, accompanied him to see the rarities of that place, visited him at his lodgings, and sent to, the testimony of his great esteem for, him, in this distich,

Ut mens, forma, decor, facies, mos, si pietas sic,
Non Anglus, verum herculè Angelus ipse fores.

And excused himself at parting for not having been able

to do him more honor, by reason of his resolute owning his (protestant) religion; which resoluteness he using at Rome, many there were that dared not to express their civilities towards him, which otherwise they would have done. And I have heard it confidently related, that for his said resolutions, which out of policy and for his own safety, might have been then spared, the English priests at Rome were highly disgusted, and it was questioned, whether the Jesuits, his countrymen there, did not design to do him mischief. Before he left Naples he returned the Marquis an acknowledgment of his great favors in an elegant copy of verses entitled *Mansus*, which is among the Latin poems. (10) That from thence (Naples) he thought to have gone into Sicily and Greece, but upon second thoughts he continued in Italy, and went to Lucca, Bononia, Ferrara, and at length to Venice; where continuing a month, he went and visited Verona and Milan. (11) That after he had shipped the books and other goods which he had bought in his travels, he returned through Lombardy, and over the Alps to Geneva, where spending some time, he became familiar with the famous Joh. Deodati, D.D. Thence, going through France, he returned home, well fraught with knowledge and manners, after he had been absent one year and three months. (12) That soon after he settled in an house in St. Bride's Churchyard near Fleet Street in London, where he instructed in the Lat. tongue two youths named John and Edw. Philips, the sons of his sister Anne by her husband Edward Philips: both which were afterwards writers, and the eldest principled as his uncle. But the times soon after changing, and the rebellion thereupon breaking forth, Milton sided with the faction, and being a man of parts, was therefore more capable than another of doing mischief, especially by his pen, as by those books which I shall anon mention, will appear. (13) That at first we find him a Presbyterian and a most sharp and violent opposer of prelacy, the established ecclesiastical discipline and the orthodox clergy. (14) That shortly after he did set on foot and maintained very odd and novel positions concerning divorce, and then taking

part with the Independents, he became a great anti-monarchist, a bitter enemy to K. Ch. I., and at length arrived to that monstrous and unparalleled height of profligate impudence, as in print to justify the most execrable murder of him the best of kings, as I shall anon tell you. Afterwards, being made Latin secretary to the Parliament, we find him a Commonwealth's man, a hater of all things that looked towards a single person, a great reproacher of the universities, scholastical degrees, decency and uniformity in the church. (15) That when Oliver ascended the throne, he became the Latin secretary, and proved to him very serviceable when employed in business of weight and moment, and did great matters to obtain a name and wealth. To conclude, he was a person of wonderful parts, of a very sharp, biting, and satirical wit. He was a good philosopher and historian, an excellent poet, Latinist, Grecian and Hebritian, a good mathematician and musician, and so rarely endowed by nature, that had he been but honestly principled, he might have been highly useful to that party, against which he all along appeared with much malice and bitterness. As for the things which he hath published, are these: (1) *Of Reformation, touching Church Discipline in England, and the causes that hitherto have hindered it*, &c. Lond. 1641. qu. At which time, as before, the nation was much divided upon the controversies about church government between the prelatical party, and Puritans, and therefore Milton did with great boldness and zeal offer his judgment as to those matters in his said book of Reformation. (2) *Animadversions upon the Remonstrant's defence against Smectymnuus.* Lond. 1641. qu. Which *Rem. Defence* was written (as 'tis said) by Dr. Jos. Hall,[1] Bishop of Exeter. (3) *Apology against the humble Remonstrant.* This was written in vindication of his *Animadversions.* (4) *Against Prelatical Episcopacy.* This I have not yet seen. (5) *The Reason of Church Government*; nor this (6) *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, &c. in two books. Lond. 1644–45, qu. To which is added in some copies a translation of

[1] See note, p. 35, n. 3.

The Judgment of Mart. Bucer concerning Divorce, &c. It must be now known, that after his settlement, upon his return from his travels, he in a month's time courted, married, and brought home to his house in London, a wife from Forsthill, lying between Halton and Oxford, named Mary, the daughter of Mr. . . . Powell of that place, Gent. But she, who was very young, and had been bred in a family of plenty and freedom, being not well pleased with her husband's retired manner of life, did shortly after leave him and went back in the country with her mother. Whereupon, though he sent divers pressing invitations, yet he could not prevail with her to come back till about 4 years after, when the garrison of Oxen was surrendered (the nighness of her father's house to which having for the most part of the meantime hindered any communication between them), she of her own accord returned and submitted to him, pleading that her mother had been the chief promoter of her frowardness. But he, being not able to bear this abuse, did therefore upon consideration, after he had consulted many eminent authors, write the said book of divorce, with intentions to be separated from her, but by the compromising of her relations the matter did not take effect: so that she continuing with him ever after till her death, he had several children by her, of whom Deborah was the third daughter, trained up by the father in Lat. and Greek, and made by him his amanuensis. (7) *Tetrachordon: Expositions upon the four chief places in Scripture which treat on marriage,* On Gen. I. 27, 28, &c. Lond. 1646. qu. (8) *Colasterion: A reply to a nameless answer against the doctrine and discipline of divorce,* &c. printed 1645. qu. Upon his publication of the said three books of marriage and divorce, the assembly of divines then sitting at Westminster took special notice of them, and thereupon, though the author had obliged them by his pen in his defence of Smectymnuus and other their controversies had with the bishops, they, impatient of having the clergy's jurisdiction (as they reckoned it) invaded, did, instead of answering, or disproving what those books had asserted,

cause him to be summoned before the House of Lords; but that House, whether approving the doctrine, or not favoring his accusers, did soon dismiss him.

To these things I must add, that after his Majesty's restoration, when the subject of divorce was under consideration with the Lords upon the account of John, Lord Ros, or Roos, his separation from his wife, Anne Pierpont, eldest daughter to Henry, Marquis of Dorchester, he was consulted by an eminent member of that house, as he was about that time by a chief officer of state, as being the prime person that was knowing in that affair. (9) *Of Education*, written or addressed to Mr. Sam. Hartlib. In this treatise he prescribed an easy and delightful method for the training up of gentry to all sorts of literature, that they might at the same time by like degrees advance in virtue and abilities to serve their country, subjoining directions for their obtaining other necessary or ornamental accomplishments. And to this end that he might put it in practice, he took a larger house, where the Earl of Barrimore sent by his aunt, the Lady Ranalagh, Sir Thomas Gardner of Essex, to be there with others (besides his two nephews) under his tuition. But whether it were that the tempers of our gentry would not bear the strictness of his discipline, or for what other reasons I cannot tell, he continued that course but a while. (10) *Areopagitica: A speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing, to the Parliament of England.* Lond. 1644. qu.; written to vindicate the freedom of the press from the tyranny of licensers, who for several reasons deprive the public of the benefit of many useful authors. (11) *Poemata: quorum pleraque intra annum ætatis vigesimum conscripsit author*, &c. Lond. 1645. oct. (12) *A Mask*. — printed 1645. oct. (13) *Poems*, &c. — printed the same year. Hitherto we find him only to have published political things, but when he saw, upon the coming of K. Charles I. to his trial, the Presbyterian ministers clamorously to assert in their sermons and writings the privileges of kings from all accountableness, or (to speak in the language of that time) non-resistance and passive obedience

to be the doctrine of all the reformed churches (which he took to be only their malignity against the Independents who had supplanted them more than for any principles of loyalty) he therefore to oppose that thesis (which as he conceived did encourage all manner of tyranny) did write and publish from divers arguments and authorities. (13) *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates: proving that it is lawful, &c. to call to account a Tyrant or King, and after due conviction to depose and put him to death*, &c. Lond. 1649–50. qu. Soon after the king being beheaded to the great astonishment of all the world, and the government thereupon changed, he was, without any seeking of his, by the endeavors of a private acquaintance who was a member of the new Council of State, chosen Latin secretary, as I have before told you. In this public station his abilities and acuteness of parts, which had been in a manner kept private, were soon taken notice of, and he was pitched upon to elude the artifice (so it was then by the faction called) of *Eikon Basilicé*. Whereupon he soon after published (14) *Iconoclastes: in Answer to a book entitled Eikon Basilicé, the Portraiture of his Sacred Majesty in his Solitudes and Sufferings.* Lond. 1649–50. qu. *ib.* 1690, oct.; which being published to the horror of all sober men, nay even to the Presbyterians themselves, yet by the then dominant party it was esteemed an excellent piece, and performed answerably to the expectation of his wit and pen. After the return of King Charles II, this book was called in by proclamation, dated 13 Aug. 1660, at which time the author (who a little before had left his house in Petty France, which had a door going into St. James's Park) absconded, for fear of being brought to a legal trial, and so consequently of receiving condign punishment. At the same time also, was called in a book of John Goodwin, then lately a minister in Coleman Street in Lond. entitled *The Obstructors of Justice*, written in defence of the sentence against his Majesty Charles I. At which time also the said Goodwin absconded to prevent justice. Soon after the publication of *Iconoclastes*, Salmasius, a professor in

Holland, who had in a large treatise not long before, maintained, as 't is said, the parity of Church Governors against Episcopacy, did publish *Defensio Regia, pro Carolo I. Rege Angliæ*, wherein he justified several matters, as Milton conceived, to the contradiction of his former book. Whereupon he wrote and published (15) *Pro Populo Anglicano defensio contra Claudii Anonymi alias Salmasii defensionem regiam.* Lond. 1651. fol.; said to be written in more correct Latin than that of Salmasius. While Milton was writing the said book, his sight began to fail him, and before it was fully completed, one of his eyes did absolutely perish. In the month of June the same year (1651) the said book was burnt at Toulouse by an arrest from the Parliament, under the government of the Duke of Orleans. And in Sept. following it was the usual practice of Marchm. Needham [1] a great crony of Milton, to abuse Salmasius in his public Mercury called *Politicus*, (as Milton had done before in his *Defensio*) by saying among other things that Christina, Qu. of Sweden had cashiered him her favor, by understanding that he was a pernicious parasite, and a promoter of tyranny. After his Majesty's restoration, this book also was called in by the same proclamation before mentioned. But so it was, that in 1652, a certain book entitled *Regii sanguinis clamor*, &c. being published, Salmasius was highly extolled in it, and Milton had his just character given therein. The nameless author of which being for a considerable time sought out, but in vain, by Milton, he at length learned by certain ministers of state sent to the Republic of England, (who would sometimes visit him as a learned man) that it was written by one Alex. More, formerly a professor and minister at Geneva, then living in Holland. Whereupon he published (16) *Pro populo Anglicano, defensio secunda, contra infamem libellum Anonymum, cui titulus, Regii sanguinis clamor ad cœlum adversus patricidas Anglicanos.* Lond. 1654, and at Hag. Com. the same year, in oct. Upon the writing of this book, the author, Milton, lost the other eye; and

[1] See p. 90, n. 1.

though to his charge he used many means, yet he could never recover either of his eyes. This book entitled *Regii sanguinis clamor* &c. though written by Dr. Peter du Moulin,[1] Prebendary of Canterbury, as it afterwards well appeared, yet Milton upon the reports before mentioned, could not be convinced to the contrary, but that it was written by the said More, and therefore not only abused him in his answers, but by his friend Needham in his *Politicus,* whereby the reputation of that learned person was severely touched. (17) *Pro se defensio contra Alex. Mornum Ecclesiaste libelli famosi, cui titulus, Regii sanguinis clamor*, &c. Lond. 1655, oct. In this book he is exceeding bitter against Morus, and pretends to give a true history of his notorious impurities both at Geneva and Leyden, and an account of his own particular life to vindicate himself from what, as he thought, was scurrilously said of him by Morus. At the end of the said book, the author, Milton, added *Ad Alex. Mori supplementum responsio.* About the time that he had finished these things, he had more leisure and time at command, and being dispensed with by having a substitute allowed him, and sometimes instructions sent home to him from attending his office of secretary, he began that laborious work of amassing out of all the classic authors both in prose and verse a Latin *Thesaurus,* to the emendation of that done by Stephanus,[2] also the composing of *Paradise Lost*, and of the framing of a *Body of Divinity* out of the Bible. All which, notwithstanding the several troubles that befell him in his fortunes, he finished after his Majesty's restoration. But to go on with the catalogue of his books according to time, take these as they follow, (18) *Treatise of civil power in ecclesiastical causes,* &c. Lond. 1659. in tw. (19) *Considerations touching the likeliest means to remove Hirelings out of the Church,* Lond. 1659. in tw. (20) *Ready and easy way to establish a free Commonwealth, and the excellencies thereof compared with,* &c. Lond.

[1] See p. xxxi, n. 3.

[2] Stephanus: Robert Estienne 1503–59, the celebrated French scholar who compiled a Latin-French dictionary, the *Thesaurus linguæ Latinæ.*

1659, in two sheets and an half in qu. This being published in Feb. the same year, was answered by G. S. in his *Dignity of Kingship*. (21) *Brief notes upon a late sermon titled, The fear of God and the King*, &c. Lond. 1660. qu. See more in Matthew Griffith *Among the Writers*, an. 1665. (22) *Accedence commenced Grammar*, &c. pr. 1661. in oct. (23) *Paradise Lost:* a Poem in 10 books, Lond. 1669. qu.; pr. in fol. with cuts, an. 1688. (24) *Paradise Regained:* a Poem in four books, Lond. 1670, qu.; pr. in fol. with cuts, an. 1688. (25) *History of Britany from the first traditional beginning, continued to the Norman Conquest*. Lond. 1670, qu. This history when it first came abroad, had only the reputation of the putting of our old authors neatly together in a connected story, not abstaining from some lashes at the ignorance, or I know not what, of those times. (26) *Artis logicæ plenior institutio ad Petri Rami methodum concinnata*. Lond. 1672. in tw. (27) *Of True Religion, Heresy, Schism, Toleration, and what best means may be used against the growth and increase of Popery*. Lond. 1673, qu. (28) *Poems*, &c. *on several occasions, both English and Latin*, &c. *composed at several times*. Lond. 1673–4. oct. Among these are mixed some of his poems before mentioned, made in his youthful years. (29) *Epistolarum familiarium lib.* I. Lond. 1674. oct. (30) *Prolusiones quædam Oratoriæ in Coll. Christi habitæ*, printed with the *familiar Epistles*. (31) *Literæ Pseudo-senatus Anglicani, Cromwellii, reliquorum perduellium nomine ac jussu conscripte*, printed in 1676, in tw. (32) *Character of the Long Parliament and of the Assembly of Divines*. Lond. 1681, in 2 sheets in qu. In which book is a notable account of their ignorance, treachery, and hypocrisy. (33) *Brief History of Muscovia and of other less known countries, lying eastward of Russia as far as Cathay*, &c. Lond. 1682, oct. (34) *The Right of the People over Tyrants*, printed lately in qu. These, I think, are all the things that he hath yet extant: those that are not, are *The Body of Divinity*, which my friend calls *Idea Theologiæ*, now, or at least

lately, in the hands of the author's acquaintance called Cyr. Skinner, living in Mark Lane, London, and the Latin *Thesaurus* in those of Edw. Philips, his nephew. At length this great scholar and frequent writer dying in his house at Bunhill, near London, in a fit of the gout, but with so little pain, that the time of his expiring was not perceived by those in the room, on the ninth or tenth day of Novemb. 1674, was buried in the grave of his father (who died very aged about 1647), in the chancel of the Church of St. Giles near Cripplegate, London. See more of him in Sir Walter Raleigh *Among the Writers*, number 458. He was of a moderate stature, and well proportioned, of a ruddy complexion, light brown hair, and had handsome features, yet his eyes were none of the quickest. When he was a student in Cambridge he was so fair and clear, that many called him the Lady of Christ's College. His deportment was affable, and his gait erect and manly, bespeaking courage and undauntedness. On which account he wore a sword while he had his sight, and was skilled in using it. He had a delicate, tuneable voice, an excellent ear, could play on the organ, and bear a part in vocal and instrumental music. The estate which his father left him was but indifferent, yet by his frugality he made it serve him and his. Out of his secretary's salary he saved 2000 £ which being lodged in the excise, and that bank failing upon his Majesty's restoration, he utterly lost that sum. By the great fire which happened in London in the beginning of Sept. 1666, he had a house in Bread Street burned, which was all the real estate that he had then left. To conclude, he was more admired abroad and by foreigners, than at home; and was much visited by them when he lived in Petty France, some of whom have out of pure devotion gone to Bread Street to see the house and chamber where he was born, &c.

IV

THE LIFE OF MILTON

By Edward Philips

Of all the several parts of history, that which sets forth the lives, and commemorates the most remarkable actions, sayings, or writings of famous and illustrious persons, whether in war or peace, whether many together, or any one in particular, as it is not the least useful in itself, so it is in highest vogue and esteem among the studious and reading part of mankind.

The most eminent in this way of history were, among the ancients, Plutarch and Diogenes Laertius; of the Greeks, the first wrote the lives, for the most part, of the most renowned heroes and warriors of the Greeks and Romans; the other, the lives of the ancient Greek Philosophers. And Cornelius Nepos (or as some will have it Æmilius Probus) of the Latins, who wrote the lives of the most illustrious Greek and Roman generals.

Among the moderns, Machiavelli, a noble Florentine, who elegantly wrote the life of Castruccio Castracani, Lord of Lucca. And of our nation, Sir Fulke Greville, who wrote the life of his most intimate friend, Sir Philip Sidney; Mr. Thomas Stanley of Cumberlo-Green, who made a most elaborate improvement to the aforesaid Laertius, by adding to what he found in him, what by diligent search and enquiry he collected from other authors of best authority; [and] Isaac Walton, who wrote the lives of Sir Henry Wotton, Dr. Donne, and for his divine poems, the admired Mr. George Herbert. Lastly, not to mention several other biographers of considerable note, the great Gassendus of France, the worthy celebrator of two no less worthy subjects of his impartial pen; *viz.* the noble philosopher Epicurus, and the most politely learned virtuoso of his age, his countryman, Monsieur Peiresk.

And pity it is the person whose memory we have here

undertaken to perpetuate by recounting the most memorable transactions of his life (though his works sufficiently recommend him to the world), finds not a well-informed pen able to set him forth, equal with the best of those here mentioned; for doubtless, had his fame been as much spread through Europe in Thuanus's[1] time, as now it is, and hath been for several years, he had justly merited from that great historian, an eulogy not inferior to the highest by him given to all the learned and ingenious that lived within the compass of his history. For we may safely and justly affirm, that take him in all respects, for acumen of wit, quickness of apprehension, sagacity of judgment, depth of argument, and elegancy of style, as well in Latin as English, as well in verse as prose, he is scarce to be paralleled by any the best of writers our nation hath in any age brought forth.

He was born in London, in a house in Breadstreet, the lease whereof, as I take it, but for certain it was a house in Breadstreet, became in time part of his estate, in the year of our Lord 1606. His father John Milton, an honest, worthy, and substantial citizen of London, by profession a scrivener; to which he voluntarily betook himself, by the advice and assistance of an intimate friend of his, eminent in that calling, upon his being cast out by his father, a bigoted Roman Catholic, for embracing, when young, the protestant faith, and abjuring the popish tenets. For he is said to have been descended of an ancient family of the Miltons, of Milton near Abingdon in Oxfordshire; where they had been a long time seated, as appears by the monuments still to be seen in Milton church; till one of the family having taken the wrong side, in the contest between the Houses of York and Lancaster, was sequestered of all his estate, but what he held by his wife. However, certain it is, that this vocation he followed for many years, at his said house in Breadstreet, with success suitable to his industry and prudent conduct of his affairs. Yet he did not so far quit his own generous and ingenious inclinations,

[1] Jacques Auguste de Thou, 1553-1617, a French historian, the writer of *Historiæ sui temporis.*

as to make himself wholly a slave to the world; for he sometimes found vacant hours to the study (which he made his recreation) of the noble science of music, in which he advanced to that perfection, that as I have been told, and as I take it by our author himself, he composed an *In Nomine* of forty parts; for which he was rewarded with a gold medal and chain by a Polish prince, to whom he presented it. However, this is a truth not to be denied, that for several songs of his composition, after the way of these times, (three or four of which are still to be seen in Old Wilby's set of Airs, besides some compositions of his in Ravenscroft's Psalms), he gained the reputation of a considerable master in this most charming of all the liberal sciences. Yet all this while, he managed his grand affair of this world with such prudence and diligence, that by the assistance of divine Providence favoring his honest endeavors, he gained a competent estate, whereby he was enabled to make a handsome provision both for the education and maintenance of his children; for three he had, and no more, all by one wife, Sarah, of the family of the Castons, derived originally from Wales, a woman of incomparable virtue and goodness: John the eldest, the subject of our present work; Christopher; and an only daughter Ann.

Christopher being principally designed for the study of the common law of England, was entered young a student of the Inner Temple, of which house he lived to be an ancient bencher, and keeping close to that study and profession all his life time, except in the time of the civil wars of England; when being a great favorer and asserter of the King's cause, and obnoxious to the Parliament's side, by acting to his utmost power against them, so long as he kept his station at Reading; and after that town was taken by the Parliament forces, being forced to quit his house there, he steered his course according to the motion of the King's army. But when the war was ended with victory and success to the Parliament party, by the valor of General Fairfax, and the craft and conduct of Cromwell, and his composition made by the help of his brother's interest with the then prevailing power, he betook himself again

to his former study and profession, following chamber-practice every term; yet came to no advancement in the world in a long time, except some small employ in the town of Ispwich, where (and near it) he lived all the latter time of his life; for he was a person of a modest, quiet temper, preferring justice and virtue before all worldly pleasure or grandeur. But in the beginning of the reign of King James the II., for his known integrity and ability in the law, he was by some persons of quality recommended to the King, and at a call of sergeants received the coif,[1] and the same day was sworn one of the barons of the Exchequer, and soon after made one of the judges of the Common Pleas. But his years and indisposition not well brooking the fatigue of public employment, he continued not long in either of these stations; but having his *quietus est*, retired to a country life, his study and devotion.

Ann, the only daughter of the said John Milton, the elder, had a considerable dowry given her by her father in marriage with Edward Philips, (the son of Edward Philips of Shrewsbury,) who, coming up young to town, was bred up in the crown-office in Chancery, and at length came to be secondary of the office under old Mr. Bembo. By him she had, besides other children that died infants, two sons yet surviving, of whom more hereafter; and by a second husband, Mr. Thomas Agar (who, upon the death of his intimate friend Mr. Philips, worthily succeeded in the place, which, except some time of exclusion before and during the Interregnum, he held for many years, and left it to Mr. Thomas Milton, the son of the aforementioned Sir Christopher, who at this day executes it with great reputation and ability), two daughters, Mary who died very young, and Ann yet surviving.

But to hasten back to our matter in hand. John, our author, who was destined to be the ornament and glory of his country, was sent, together with his brother, to Paul's school, whereof Dr. Gill the elder was then chief master; where he was entered into the first rudiments of learning, and advanced therein with that admirable suc-

[1] Coif: a skull-cap, then commonly worn by the sergeants at law.

cess, not more by the discipline of the school and good instructions of his masters (for that he had another master, possibly at his father's house, appears by the *Fourth Elegy* of his Latin poems written in his 18th year, to Thomas Young, pastor of the English Company of Merchants at Hamburg, wherein he owns and styles him his master), than by his own happy genius, prompt wit and apprehension, and insuperable industry: for he generally sat up half the night, as well in voluntary improvements of his own choice, as the exact perfecting of his school exercises.

So that at the age of 15 he was full ripe for academic learning, and accordingly was sent to the University of Cambridge; where in Christ's College under the tuition of a very eminent learned man, whose name I cannot call to mind, he studied seven years, and took his degree of Master of Arts; and for the extraordinary wit and reading he had shown in his performances to attain his degree (some whereof, spoken at a *Vacation Exercise* in his 19th year of age, are to be yet seen in his *Miscellaneous Poems*), he was loved and admired by the whole university, particularly by the fellows and most ingenious persons of his house. Among the rest there was a young gentleman, one Mr. King, with whom, for his great learning and parts, he had contracted a particular friendship and intimacy; whose death (for he was drowned on the Irish seas in his passage from Chester to Ireland) he bewails in that most excellent monody in his forementioned poems, intituled *Lycidas*. Never was the loss of friend so elegantly lamented; and among the rest of his *Juvenile Poems*, some he wrote at the age of 15, which contain a poetical genius scarce to be paralleled by any English writer.

Soon after he had taken his Master's degree, he thought fit to leave the university: not upon any disgust or discontent for want of preferment, as some ill-willers have reported; nor upon any cause whatsoever forced to fly, as his detractors maliciously feign; but from which aspersion he sufficiently clears himself in his *Second Answer to*

Alexander Morus, the author of a book called, *Clamor Regii Sanguinis ad Coelum*,[1] the chief of his calumniators; in which he plainly makes it out, that after his leaving the university, to the no small trouble of his fellow-collegiates, who in general regretted his absence, he for the space of five years lived for the most part with his father and mother at their house at Horton near Colebrook in Berkshire; whither his father, having got an estate to his content, and left off all business, was retired from the cares and fatigues of the world.

After the said term of five years, his mother then dying, he was willing to add to his acquired learning the observation of foreign customs, manners, and institutions; and thereupon took a resolution to travel, more especially designing for Italy; and accordingly, with his father's consent and assistance, he put himself into an equipage suitable to such a design; and so, intending to go by the way of France, he set out for Paris, accompanied only with one man, who attended him through all his travels; for his prudence was his guide, and his learning his introduction and presentation to persons of most eminent quality. However, he had also a most civil and obliging letter of direction and advice from Sir Henry Wotton, then Provost of Eton, and formerly resident Ambassador from King James the First to the state of Venice; which letter is to be seen in the first edition of his *Miscellaneous Poems*.

At Paris, being recommended by the said Sir Henry and other persons of quality, he went first to wait upon my Lord Scudamore, then Ambassador in France from King Charles the First. My Lord received him with wonderful civility; and understanding he had a desire to make a visit to the great Hugo Grotius, he sent several of his attendants to wait upon him, and to present him in his name to that renowned doctor and statesman, who was

[1] See p. xxxii. To defend himself against the attack of Milton, More published in 1654 *Fides Publica*, and a supplement to this in 1655. Milton answered these pamphlets by writing the *Pro Se Defensio* in 1665, which is the *Second Answer* referred to here.

at that time Ambassador from Christina, Queen of Sweden, to the French king. Grotius took the visit kindly, and gave him entertainment suitable to his worth, and the high commendations he had heard of him. After a few days, not intending to make the usual tour of France, he took his leave of my Lord, who at his departure from Paris, gave him letters to the English merchants residing in any part through which he was to travel, in which they were requested to show him all the kindness, and do him all the good offices that lay in their power.

From Paris he hastened on his journey to Nice, where he took shipping, and in a short space arrived at Genoa; from whence he went to Leghorn, thence to Pisa, and so to Florence. In this city he met with many charming objects, which invited him to stay a longer time than he intended; the pleasant situation of the place, the nobleness of the structures, the exact humanity and civility of the inhabitants, the more polite and refined sort of language there, than elsewhere. During the time of his stay here, which was about two months, he visited all the private academies of the city, which are places established for the improvement of wit and learning, and maintained a correspondence and perpetual friendship among gentlemen fitly qualified for such an institution; and such sort of academies there are in all or most of the noted cities in Italy. Visiting these places, he was soon taken notice of by the most learned and ingenious of the nobility, and the grand wits of Florence, who caressed him with all the honors and civilities imaginable; particularly Jacobo Gaddi, Carolo Dati, Antonio Francini, Frescobaldo, Cultellino, Bonmatthei and Clementillo: whereof Gaddi hath a large, elegant Italian canzonet in his praise, [and] Dati, a Latin epistle, both printed before his Latin poems, together with a Latin distich of the Marquis of Villa, and another of Selvaggi, and a Latin tetrastich of Giovanni Salsilli, a Roman.

From Florence he took his journey to Siena, from thence to Rome; where he was detained much about the same time he had been at Florence; as well by his desire

of seeing all the rarities and antiquities of that most glorious and renowned city, as by the conversation of Lucas Holstenius, and other learned and ingenious men, who highly valued his acquaintance, and treated him with all possible respect.

From Rome he travelled to Naples, where he was introduced by a certain hermit, who accompanied him in his journey from Rome thither, into the knowledge of Giovanni Baptista Manso, Marquis of Villa, a Neapolitan by birth, a person of high nobility, virtue, and honor, to whom the famous Italian poet, Torquato Tasso, wrote his treatise *De Amicitia;* and moreover mentions him with great honor in that illustrious poem of him, entitled, *Gierusalemme Liberata.* This noble marquis received him with extraordinary respect and civility, and went with him himself to give him a sight of all that was of note and remark in the city, particularly the viceroy's palace, and was often in person to visit him at his lodging. Moreover, this noble marquis honored him so far, as to make a Latin distich in his praise, as hath been already mentioned; which being no less pithy then short, though already in print, it will not be unworth the while here to repeat.

> "*Ut mens, forma, decor, facies,* [*mos,*] *si pietas sic*
> *Non Anglus, verùm hercle Angelus ipse foret.*"

In return of this honor, and in gratitude for the many favors and civilities received of him, he presented him at his departure with a large Latin eclogue, intitled *Mansus,* afterwards published among his *Latin Poems.* The marquis at his taking leave of him, gave him this compliment: that he would have done him many more offices of kindness and civility, but was therefore rendered incapable, in regard he had been over-liberal in his speech against the religion of the country.

He had entertained some thoughts of passing over into Sicily and Greece, but was diverted by the news he received from England, that affairs there were tending toward a civil war; thinking it a thing unworthy in him to be taking his pleasure in foreign parts, while his country-

men at home were fighting for their liberty: but first resolved to see Rome once more; and though the merchants gave him a caution that the Jesuits were hatching designs against him in case he should return thither, by reason of the freedom he took in all his discourses of religion; nevertheless he ventured to prosecute his resolution, and to Rome the second time he went; determining with himself not industriously to begin to fall into any discourse about religion, but, being asked, not to deny or endeavor to conceal his own sentiments.

Two months he stayed at Rome; and in all that time never flinched, but was ready to defend the orthodox faith against all opposers; and so well he succeeded therein, that, good Providence guarding him, he went safe from Rome back to Florence, where his return to his friends of that city was welcomed with as much joy and affection, as, had it been to his friends and relations in his own country, he could not have come a more joyful and welcome guest.

Here, having stayed as long as at his first coming, excepting an excursion of a few days to Lucca, crossing the Apennine, and passing through Bononia and Ferrara, he arrived at Venice; where when he had spent a month's time in viewing of that stately city, and shipped up a parcel of curious and rare books which he had picked up in his travels (particularly a chest or two of choice music-books of the best masters flourishing about that time in Italy, namely, Luca Marenzo, Monte Verde, Horatio Vecchi, Cifa, the Prince of Venosa, and several others), he took his course through Verona, Milan, and the Poenine Alps, and so by the lake Leman to Geneva; where he stayed for some time, and had daily converse with the most learned Giovanni Deodati, theology professor in that city; and so returning through France, by the same way he had passed it going to Italy, he, after a peregrination of one complete year and about three months, arrived safe in England, about the time of the King's making his second expedition against the Scots.

Soon after his return, and visits paid to his father and

other friends, he took him a lodging in St. Bride's Churchyard, at the house of one Russel, a tailor, where he first undertook the education and instruction of his sister's two sons, the younger whereof had been wholly committed to his charge and care.

And here by the way, I judge it not impertinent to mention the many authors both of the Latin and Greek, which through his excellent judgment and way of teaching, far above the pedantry of common public schools (where such authors are scarce ever heard of), were run over within no greater compass of time, than from ten to fifteen or sixteen years of age. Of the Latin, the four grand authors *De Re Rustica*, Cato, Varro, Columella and Palladius; Cornelius Celsus, an ancient physician of the Romans; a great part of Pliny's *Natural History ;* Vitruvius his *Architecture ;* Frontinus his *Stratagems ;* with the two egregious poets, Lucretius and Manilius. Of the Greek, Hesiod, a poet equal with Homer; Aratus his *Phaenomena*, and *Diosemeia ;* Dionysius Afer *De Situ Orbis ;* Oppian's *Cynegetics* and *Halieutics ;* Quintus Calaber his *Poem of the Trojan War* continued from Homer; Apollonius Rhodius his *Argonautics :* and in prose, Plutarch's *Placita Philosophorum*, and Περι Παιδων 'Αγογιας [*sic*]; Geminus's *Astronomy ;* Xenophon's *Cyri Institutio*, and *Anabasis ;* Ælian's *Tactics ;* and Polyænus his *Warlike Stratagems*.[1] Thus by teaching, he in some measure increased his own knowledge, having the reading of all these authors as it were by proxy ; and all this might possibly have conduced to the preserving of his eyesight, had he not moreover been perpetually busied in his own laborious undertakings of the book and pen.

Nor did the time thus studiously employed in conquering the Greek and Latin tongues, hinder the attaining to the chief oriental languages, *viz.*, the Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriac, so far as to go through the *Pentateuch*, or Five Books of Moses in Hebrew, to make a good entrance into the *Targum*, or Chaldee Paraphrase, and to understand

[1] Compare this last with those on pp. xli and 12, 14, 15, 17.

several chapters of St. Matthew in the Syriac Testament: besides an introduction into several arts and sciences, by reading Urstisius his *Arithmetic*, Riff's *Geometry*, Petiscus his *Trigonometry*, Joannes de Sacro Bosco *De Sphæra;* and into the Italian and French tongues, by reading in Italian Giovan Villani's *History of the Transactions between several petty States of Italy;* and in French a great part of Pierre Davity, the famous geographer of France in his time.

The Sunday's work was, for the most part, the reading each day a chapter of the Greek Testament, and hearing his learned exposition upon the same (and how this savored of atheism in him, I leave to the courteous backbiter to judge). The next work after this, was the writing from his own dictation, some part, from time to time, of a tractate which he thought fit to collect from the ablest of divines who had written of that subject: Amesius, Wollebius, &c., *viz.* *A Perfect System of Divinity*, of which more hereafter.

Now persons so far manuducted into the highest paths of literature both divine and human, had they received his documents with the same acuteness of wit and apprehension, the same industry, alacrity, and thirst after knowledge, as the instructor was indued with, what prodigies of wit and learning might they have proved! The scholars might in some degree have come near to the equalling of the master, or at least have in some sort made good what he seems to predict in the close of an elegy he made in the seventeenth year of his age, upon the death of one of his sister's children (a daughter), who died in her infancy:

"Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,
Her false, imagin'd loss cease to lament,
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild:
This if thou do, he will an offspring give,
That till the world's last end shall make thy name to live."[1]

But to return to the thread of our discourse. He made no long stay in his lodgings in St. Bride's Church-yard; necessity of having a place to dispose his books in, and other

[1] See the last stanza of *D. F. I.*

goods fit for the furnishing of a good, handsome house, hastening him to take one; and, accordingly, a pretty garden-house he took in Aldersgate-street, at the end of an entry, and therefore the fitter for his turn, by the reason of the privacy; besides that there are few streets in London more free from noise than that. Here first it was that his academic erudition was put in practice, and vigorously proceeded, he himself giving an example to those under him (for it was not long after his taking this house, ere his elder nephew was put to board with him also) of hard study and spare diet; only this advantage he had, that once in three weeks or a month, he would drop into the society of some young sparks of his acquaintance, the chief whereof were Mr. Alphry, and Mr. Miller, two gentlemen of Gray's Inn, the beaux of those times, but nothing near so bad as those now-a-days; with these gentlemen he would so far made bold with his body, as now and then to keep a gawdy-day.

In this house he continued several years, in the one or two first whereof, he set out several treatises, *viz.*, that *Of Reformation;* that *Against Prelatical Episcopacy; The Reason of Church-Government; The Defence of Smectymnuus*, at least the greatest part of them, but as I take it, all; and some time after, one sheet *Of Education* which he dedicated to Mr. Samuel Hartlib, he that wrote so much of husbandry (this sheet is printed at the end of the second edition of his *Poems*), and lastly *Areopagitica.*

During the time also of his continuance in this house, there fell out several occasions of the increasing of his family. His father, who till the taking of Reading by the Earl of Essex his forces, had lived with his other son at his house there, was upon that son's dissettlement necessitated to betake himself to this his eldest son, with whom he lived for some years, even to his dying day. In the next place he had an addition of some scholars; to which may be added, his entering into matrimony; but he had his wife's company so small a time, that he may well be said to have become a single man again soon after.

About Whitsuntide it was, or a little after, that he took

a journey into the country; no body about him certainly knowing the reason, or that it was any more than a journey of recreation; after a month's stay, home he returns a married man, that went out a bachelor; his wife being Mary, the eldest daughter of Mr. Richard Powell, then a justice of peace, of Forresthill, near Shotover in Oxfordshire; some few of her nearest relations accompanying the bride to her new habitation; which by reason the father nor any body else were yet come, was able to receive them; where the feasting held for some days in celebration of the nuptials, and for entertainment of the bride's friends. At length they took their leave, and returning to Foresthill, left the sister behind; probably not much to her satisfaction, as appeared by the sequel. By that time she had for a month or thereabout led a philosophical life (after having been used to a great house, and much company and joviality), her friends, possibly incited by her own desire, made earnest suit by letter, to have her company the remaining part of the summer, which was granted, on condition of her return at the time appointed, Michaelmas, or thereabout. In the meantime came his father, and some of the forementioned disciples.

And now the studies went on with so much the more vigor, as there were more hands and heads employed; the old gentleman living wholly retired to his rest and devotion, without the least trouble imaginable. Our author, now as it were a single man again, made it his chief diversion now and then in an evening, to visit the lady Margaret Lee, daughter to the —— Lee, Earl of Marlborough, Lord High Treasurer of England, and President of the Privy Council, to King James the First. This lady being a woman of great wit and ingenuity, had a particular honor for him, and took much delight in his company, as likewise her husband Captain Hobson, a very accomplished gentleman; and what esteem he at the same time had for her, appears by a sonnet he made in praise of her, to be seen among his other *Sonnets* in his extant *Poems*.

Michaelmas being come, and no news of his wife's return, he sent for her by letter; and receiving no answer, sent

several other letters, which were also unanswered; so that at last he dispatched down a foot messenger with a letter, desiring her return. But the messenger came back not only without an answer, at least a satisfactory one, but to the best of my remembrance, reported that he was dismissed with some sort of contempt. This proceeding, in all probability, was grounded upon no other cause but this, namely, that the family being generally addicted to the cavalier party, as they called it, and some of them possibly engaged in the King's service, who by this time had his headquarters at Oxford, and was in some prospect of success, they began to repent them of having matched the eldest daughter of the family to a person so contrary to them in opinion; and thought it would be a blot in their escutcheon, whenever that court should come to flourish again.

However, it so incensed our author, that he thought it would be dishonorable ever to receive her again, after such a repulse; so that he forthwith prepared to fortify himself with arguments for such a resolution, and accordingly wrote two treatises, by which he undertook to maintain, that it was against reason, and the enjoinment of it not provable by Scripture, for any married couple disagreeable in humor and temper, or having an aversion to each [other], to be forced to live yoked together all their days. The first was, his *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce;* of which there was printed a second edition, with some additions. The other in prosecution of the first, was styled *Tetrachordon.* Then the better to confirm his own opinion by the attestation of others, he set out a piece called *The Judgment of Martin Bucer,* a protestant minister, being a translation, out of that reverend divine, of some part of his works, exactly agreeing with him in sentiment. Lastly, he wrote in answer to a pragmatical clerk, who would needs give himself the honor of writing against so great a man, his *Colasterion,* or *Rod of Correction for a Saucy Impertinent.*

Not very long after the setting forth of these treatises, having application made to him by several gentlemen of his acquaintance for the education of their sons, as understanding haply the progress he had infixed by his first

undertakings of that nature, he laid out for a larger house, and soon found it out.

But in the interim before he removed, there fell out a passage, which though it altered not the whole course he was going to steer, yet it put a stop or rather an end to a grand affair, which was more than probably thought to be then in agitation; it was indeed a design of marrying one of Dr. Davis's daughters, a very handsome and witty gentlewoman, but averse, as it is said, to this motion. However, the intelligence hereof, and the then declining state of the King's cause, and consequently of the circumstances of Justice Powell's family, caused them to set all engines on work, to restore the late married woman to the station wherein they a little before had planted her. At last this device was pitched upon. There dwelt in the lane of St. Martin's-le-Grand, which was hard by, a relation of our author's, one Blackborough, whom it was known he often visited, and upon this occasion the visits were the more narrowly observed, and possibly there might be a combination between both parties; the friends on both sides concentring in the same action, though on different behalfs. One time above the rest, he making his usual visit, the wife was ready in another room, and on a sudden he was surprised to see one whom he thought to have never seen more, making submission and begging pardon on her knees before him. He might probably at first make some show of aversion and rejection; but partly his own generous nature, more inclinable to reconciliation than to perseverance in anger and revenge, and partly the strong intercession of friends on both sides, soon brought him to an act of oblivion, and a firm league of peace for the future; and it was at length concluded, that she should remain at a friend's house, till such time as he was settled in his new house at Barbican, and all things for her reception in order; the place agreed on for her present abode, was the widow Webber's house in St. Clement's Church-yard, whose second daughter had been married to the other brother many years before. The first fruits of her return to her husband was a brave girl, born within a year after; though, whether by

ill constitution or want of care, she grew more and more decrepit.

But it was not only by children that she increased the number of the family; for in no very long time after her coming, she had a great resort of her kindred with her in the house, *viz.* her father and mother, and several of her brothers and sisters, which were in all pretty numerous; who upon his father's sickening and dying soon after, went away.

And now the house looked again like a house of the Muses only, though the accession of scholars was not great. Possibly his proceeding thus far in the education of youth may have been the occasion of some of his adversaries calling him pedagogue and schoolmaster; whereas it is well known he never set up for a public school to teach all the young fry of the parish, but only was willing to impart his learning and knowledge to relations, and the sons of some gentlemen that were his intimate friends; besides, that neither his converse, nor his writings, nor his manner of teaching ever savored in the least anything of pedantry; and probably he might have some prospect of putting in practice his academical institution, according to the model laid down in his sheet *Of Education*. The progress of which design was afterwards diverted by a series of alteration in the affairs of state; for I am much mistaken, if there were not about this time a design in agitation of making him adjutant-general in Sir William Waller's army. But the new modeling of the army soon following, proved an obstruction to that design; and Sir William, his commission being laid down, began, as the common saying is, to turn *cat in pan.*[1]

It was not long after the march of Fairfax and Cromwell through the city of London with the whole army, to quell the insurrections Brown and Massey, now malcontents also, were endeavoring to raise in the city against the army's proceedings, ere he left his great house in Barbican, and betook himself to a smaller in High Holburn, among those that open backward into Lincoln's Inn Fields. Here

[1] See the *N. E. D.* under the word *Cat*, 12.

he lived a private and quiet life, still prosecuting his studies and curious search into knowledge, the grand affair perpetually of his life; till such time as, the war being now at an end, with complete victory to the Parliament's side, as the Parliament then stood purged of all its dissenting members, and the King after some treaties with the army *re infecta*, brought to his trial; the form of government being now changed into a free state, he was hereupon obliged to write a treatise, called *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*.

After which his thoughts were bent upon retiring again to his own private studies, and falling upon such subjects as his proper genius prompted him to write of, among which was the history of our own nation from the beginning till the Norman Conquest, wherein he had made some progress. When (for this his last treatise, reviving the fame of other things he had formerly published) being more and more taken notice of for his excellency of style, and depth of judgment, he was courted into the service of this new commonwealth, and at last prevailed with (for he never hunted after preferment, nor affected the tintamar and hurry of public business) to take upon him the office of Latin secretary to the Council of State, for all their letters to foreign princes and states; for they stuck to this noble and generous resolution, not to write to any, or receive answers from them, but in a language most proper to maintain a correspondence among the learned of all nations in this part of the world; scorning to carry on their affairs in the wheedling, lisping jargon of the cringing French, especially having a minister of state able to cope with the ablest any prince or state could employ, for the Latin tongue. And so well he acquitted himself in this station, that he gained from abroad both reputation to himself, and credit to the state that employed him.

And it was well the business of his office came not very fast upon him; for he was scarce well warm in his secretaryship before other work flowed in upon him, which took him up for some considerable time. In the

first place there came out a book said to have been written by the king, and finished a little before his death, intituled εἰκὼν βασιλική, that is, *The Royal Image;* a book highly cried up for its smooth style, and pathetical composure; wherefore to obviate the impression it was like to make among the many, he was obliged to write an answer, which he intituled εἰκονοκλάστης or *Image-Breaker.*

And upon the heels of that, out comes in public the great kill-cow of Christendom, with his *Defensio Regis contra Populum Anglicanum;* a man so famous and cried up for his Plinian Exercitations, and other pieces of reputed learning, that there could no where have been found a champion that durst lift up the pen against so formidable an adversary, had not our little English David had the courage to undertake this great French Goliath. To whom he gave such a hit in the forehead, that he presently staggered, and soon after fell. For immediately upon the coming out of the answer, intituled, *Defensio Populi Anglicani contra Claudium Anonymum,* &c. he that till then had been chief minister and superintendent in the court of the learned Christina, Queen of Sweden, dwindled in esteem to that degree, that he at last vouchsafed to speak to the meanest servant. In short, he was dismissed with so cold and slighting an adieu, that after a faint dying reply, he was glad to have recourse to death, the remedy of evils, and ender of controversies.

And now I presume our author had some breathing space, but it was not long. For though Salmasius was departed, he left some stings behind; new enemies started up, barkers, though no great biters. Who the first asserter of Salmasius his cause was, is not certainly known, but variously conjectured at, some supposing it to be one Janus, a lawyer of Gray's Inn, some Dr. Bramhal, made by King Charles the Second, after his restoration, Archbishop of Armagh in Ireland; but whoever the author was, the book was thought fit to be taken into correction; and our author not thinking it worth his own undertaking, to the disturbing the progress of whatever more chosen work he had then in hands, committed this task to the youngest of

his nephews; but with such exact emendations before it went to the press, that it might have very well passed for his, but that he was willing the person that took the pains to prepare it for his examination and polishment, should have the name and credit of being the author; so that it came forth under this title, *Joannis Philippi Angli Defensio pro Populo Anglicano contra*, &c.

During the writing and publishing of this book, he lodged at one Thomson's next door to the Bull-head tavern at Charing-Cross, opening into the Spring-Garden; which seems to have been only a lodging taken till his designed apartment in Scotland-Yard was prepared for him. For hither he soon removed from the aforesaid place; and here his third child, a son, was born, which through the ill usage, or bad constitution, of an ill-chosen nurse, died an infant.

From this apartment, whether he thought it not healthy, or otherwise convenient for his use, or whatever else was the reason, he soon after took a pretty garden-house in Petty-France in Westminster, next door to the Lord Scudamore's, and opening into St. James's Park. Here he remained no less than eight years, namely, from the year 1652, till within a few weeks of King Charles the Second's restoration.

In this house his first wife dying in childbed, he married a second, who after a year's time died in childbed also. This second marriage was about two or three years after his being wholly deprived of sight, which was just going about the time of his answering Salmasius; whereupon his adversaries gladly take occasion of imputing his blindness as a judgment upon him for his answering the King's book, &c. whereas it is most certainly known, that his sight, what with his continual study, his being subject to the headache, and his perpetual tampering with physic to preserve it, had been decaying for above a dozen years before, and the sight of one for a long time clearly lost. Here he wrote, by his amanuensis, his two *Answers to Alexander More*, who upon the last answer quitted the field.

So that being now quiet from state adversaries and public contests, he had leisure again for his own studies and private designs; which were his foresaid *History of England;* and a new *Thesaurus Linguæ Latinæ,* according to the manner of Stephanus, a work he had been long since collecting from his own reading, and still went on with it at times, even very near to his dying day; but the papers after his death were so discomposed and deficient that it could not be made fit for the press; however, what there was of it, was made use of for another dictionary.

But the height of his noble fancy and invention began now to be seriously and mainly employed in a subject worthy of such a Muse, *viz.* a heroic poem, entitled, *Paradise Lost;* the noblest in the general esteem of learned and judicious persons, of any yet written by any either ancient or modern. This subject was first designed a tragedy, and in the fourth book of the poem there are six verses, which several years before the poem was begun, were shown to me and some others, as designed for the very beginning of the said tragedy. The verses are these:—

"O thou that with surpassing glory crown'd!
Look'st from thy sole dominion, like the god
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminish'd heads; to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice; and add thy name,
O Sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams
That bring to my remembrance, from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down,
Warring in Heaven, against Heaven's glorious King."[1]

There is another very remarkable passage in the composure of this poem, which I have a particular occasion to remember; for whereas I had the perusal of it from the very beginning, for some years, as I went from time to time to visit him, in a parcel of ten, twenty, or thirty verses at a time, which being written by whatever hand came next, might possibly want correction as to the orthog-

[1] See *P. L.* IV, 32–113.

raphy and pointing; having as the summer came on, not having been showed any for a considerable while, and, desiring the reason thereof, was answered: that his vein never happily flowed but from the autumnal equinoctial to the vernal, and that whatever he attempted [otherwise] was never to his satisfaction, though he courted his fancy never so much, so that in all the years he was about this poem, he may be said to have spent but half his time therein.

It was but a little before the King's restoration that he wrote and published his book *In Defence of a Commonwealth;* so undaunted he was in declaring his true sentiments to the world; and not long before, his *Power of the Civil Magistrate in Ecclesiastical Affairs*, and his *Treatise against Hirelings*, just upon the King's coming over; having a little before been sequestered from his office of Latin secretary, and the salary thereunto belonging.

He was forced to leave his house also in Petty-France, where all the time of his abode there, which was eight years, as above-mentioned, he was frequently visited by persons of quality, particularly my Lady Ranalagh, whose son for some time he instructed; all learned foreigners of note, who could not part out of the city, without giving a visit to a person so eminent; and lastly, by particular friends that had a high esteem for him, *viz.* Mr. Andrew Marvel, young Lawrence (the son of him that was president of Oliver's council), to whom there is a sonnet among the rest, in his printed *Poems;* Mr. Marchamont Needham, the writer of *Politicus;* but above all, Mr. Cyriac Skinner whom he honored with two sonnets, one long since public among his *Poems*, the other but newly printed.

His next removal was, by the advice of those that wished him well, and had a concern for his preservation, into a place of retirement and abscondence, till such time as the current of affairs for the future should instruct him what farther course to take. It was a friend's house in Bartholomew Close, where he lived till the act of oblivion came forth; which it pleased God, proved as favorable to him as could be hoped or expected, through the intercession

of some that stood his friends both in Council and Parliament; particularly in the House of Commons, Mr. Andrew Marvel, a member for Hull, acted vigorously in his behalf, and made a considerable party for him; so that, together with John Goodwin[1] of Coleman Street, he was only so far excepted as not to bear any office in the Commonwealth.

Soon after appearing again in public, he took a house in Holborn near Red Lyon Fields; where he stayed not long, before his pardon having passed the seal, he removed to Jewin Street. There he lived when he married his 3d wife, recommended to him by his old friend Dr. Paget in Coleman Street.

But he stayed not long after his new marriage, ere he removed to a house in the Artillery-walk leading to Bunhill Fields. And this was his last stage in this world, but it was of many years continuance, more perhaps than he had had in any other place besides.

Here he finished his noble poem, and published it in the year 1666. The first edition was printed in quarto by one Simons, a printer in Aldersgate Street; the other in a large octavo, by Starky near Temple-Bar, amended, enlarged, and differently disposed as to the number of books by his own hand, that is by his own appointment; the last set forth, many years since his death, in a large folio, with cuts added, by Jacob Tonson.

Here it was also that he finished and published his history of our nation till the Conquest, all complete so far as he went, some passages only excepted; which, being thought too sharp against the clergy, could not pass the hand of the licenser, were in the hands of the late Earl of Anglesey while he lived; where at present is uncertain.

It cannot be concluded when he wrote his excellent tragedy entitled *Samson Agonistes*, but sure enough it is that it came forth after his publication of *Paradise Lost*, together with his other poem called *Paradise Regained*,

[1] John Goodwin had written *The Obstructors of Justice*. See p. li, and also the orders of Parliament relating to Milton and Goodwin, Masson, IV, 174, 181-195.

which doubtless was begun and finished and printed after the other was published, and that in a wonderful short space considering the sublimeness of it; however, it is generally censured to be much inferior to the other, though he could not hear with patience any such thing when related to him. Possibly the subject may not afford such variety of invention; but it is thought by the most judicious to be little or nothing inferior to the other for style and decorum.

The said Earl of Anglesey, whom he presented with a copy of the unlicensed papers of his history, came often here to visit him, as very much coveting his society and converse; as likewise others of the nobility, and many persons of eminent quality; nor were the visits of foreigners ever more frequent than in this place, almost to his dying day.

His treatise *Of True Religion, Heresy, Schism and Toleration*, &c. was doubtless the last thing of his writing that was published before his death. He had, as I remember, prepared for the press an answer to some little scribing quack in London, who had written a scurrilous libel against him; but whether by the dissuasion of friends, as thinking him a fellow not worth his notice, or for what other cause I know not, this answer was never published.

He died in the year 1673, towards the latter end of the summer, and had a very decent interment according to his quality, in the church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, being attended from his house to the church by several gentlemen then in town, his principal well-wishers and admirers.

He had three daughters who survived him many years (and a son) all by his first wife (of whom sufficient mention hath been made): Anne his eldest as above said, and Mary his second, who were both born at his house in Barbican; and Deborah the youngest, who is yet living, born at his house in Petty-France, between whom and his second daughter, the son, named John, was born as above-mentioned, at his apartment in Scotland Yard. By his second wife, Catharine, the daughter of captain Woodcock of Hackney, he had only one daughter, of which the

mother, the first year after her marriage, died in child-bed, and the child also within a month after. By his third wife Elizabeth, the daughter of one Mr. Minshal of Cheshire, (and kinswoman to Dr. Paget), who survived him, and is said to be yet living, he never had any child.

And those he had by the first he made serviceable to him in that very particular in which he most wanted their service, and supplied his want of eyesight by their eyes and tongue. For though he had daily about him one or other to read to him; some persons of man's estate, who of their own accord greedily catched at the opportunity of being his readers, that they might as well reap the benefit of what they read to him, as oblige him by the benefit of their reading; others of younger years sent by their parents to the same end; yet, excusing only the eldest daughter by reason of her bodily infirmity and difficult utterance of speech (which to say the truth I doubt was the principal cause of excusing her), the other two were condemned to the performance of reading, and exactly pronouncing of all the languages of whatever book he should at one time or other think fit to peruse; *viz.* the Hebrew (and I think the Syriac), the Greek, the Latin, the Italian, Spanish, and French. All which sorts of books to be confined to read, without understanding one word, must needs be a trial of patience almost beyond endurance; yet it was endured by both for a long time. Yet the irksomeness of this employment could not be always concealed, but broke out more and more into expressions of uneasiness; so that at length they were all (even the eldest also) sent out to learn some curious and ingenious sorts of manufacture, that are proper for women to learn, particularly embroideries in gold or silver. It had been happy indeed, if the daughters of such a person had been made in some measure inheritrixes of their father's learning; but since fate otherwise decreed, the greatest honor that can be ascribed to this now living (and so would have been to the others, had they lived) is to be daughter to a man of his extraordinary character.

He is said to have died worth 1500£ in money (a con-

siderable estate, all things considered) besides household goods; for he sustained such losses as might well have broke any person less frugal and temperate than himself; no less than 2000£ which he had put for security and improvement into the excise office, but neglecting to recall it in time, could never after get it out, with all the power and interest he had in the great ones of those times; besides another great sum, by mismanagement and for want of good advice.

Thus I have reduced into form and order whatever I have been able to rally up, either from the recollection of my own memory of things transacted while I was with him, or the information of others, equally conversant afterwards, or from his own mouth by frequent visits to the last.

I shall conclude with two material passages, which though they relate not immediately to our author, or his own particular concerns, yet in regard they happened during his public employ, and consequently fell most under his cognizance, it will not be amiss here to subjoin them. The first was this:

Before the war broke forth between the States of England and the Dutch, the Hollanders sent over three ambassadors in order to an accommodation; but they returning *re infecta*, the Dutch sent away a plenipotentiary, to offer peace upon much milder terms, or at least to gain more time. But this plenipotentiary could not make such haste, but that the Parliament had procured a copy of their instructions in Holland, which were delivered by our author to his kinsman that was then with him, to translate for the Council to view, before the said plenipotentiary had taken shipping for England; [and] an answer to all he had in charge lay ready for him, before he made his public entry into London.

In the next place there came a person with a very sumptuous train, pretending himself an agent from the prince of Condé, then in arms against Cardinal Mazarin: the Parliament mistrusting him, set their instrument so busily at work, that in four or five days they had pro-

cured intelligence from Paris, that he was a spy from King Charles; whereupon the very next morning our author's kinsman was sent to him, with an order of Council commanding him to depart the kingdom within three days, or expect the punishment of a spy.

By these two remarkable passages, we may clearly discover the industry and good intelligence of those times.

SOME IMPORTANT DATES IN THE LIFE OF MILTON[1]

Event	Date
Born	December 9, 1608
Entered St. Paul's School	1620?
Admitted to Christ's College, Cambridge	February 12, 1625
Took the B.A. degree	March 26, 1629
On the Morning of Christ's Nativity, written	December, 1629
Took the M.A. degree	July 3, 1632
Lived with his father at Horton	1632–38
L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, Comus, Lycidas	written 1632–38
Continental Journey	April, 1638–July or August, 1639
Took up residence in London	1639
Engaged in the teaching of boys	1639–1647
Married Mary Powell	June, 1643
Appointed Secretary for Foreign Tongues	March, 1649
Became completely blind	1652
Death of Mary Milton	between May and October, 1652
Married Katherine Woodcock	1657
Death of his second wife	March, 1658
Paradise Lost begun	1658
Discharged from the Secretaryship	March, 1660
In hiding	May 7, 1660
Order for his arrest	June 16, 1660
Arrested and in prison	August 13–28? — December 15, 1660
Married Elizabeth Minshull	February 24, 1663
Lived at Chalfont St. Giles, because of the plague	July, 1665 to February or March, 1666
Died	November 8, 1674

[1] These dates are taken from Masson, and are given here to facilitate comparison with those in the Biographies.

THE PRINCIPAL WORKS OF MILTON IN THE ORDER OF PUBLICATION[1]

Work	Date
Comus, published by Lawes	1637
Lycidas, published in a volume of verse to the memory of Edward King	1638
Of Reformation touching Church Discipline	May, 1641
Of Prelatical Episcopacy	June, 1641
Animadversions upon the Remonstrant's Defence against Smectymnuus	July, 1641
The Reason of Church Government	February, 1642
Apology against a Pamphlet called a Modest Confutation of the Animadversions	March, 1642
The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce	August, 1643
Education	June, 1644
The Judgment of Martin Bucer concerning Divorce	July, 1644
Areopagitica	November, 1644
Tetrachordon	March, 1645
Colasterion	March, 1645
First edition of the *Minor Poems*	1645
Tenure of Kings and Magistrates	February, 1649
Eikonoklastes	October, 1649
A Defence of the English People	April, 1651
A Second Defence of the People of England	May, 1654
Defence against Alexander Morus	1655
A Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes	February, 1659
Considerations touching the likeliest means to remove Hirelings out of the Church	August, 1659
A Free Commonwealth	February–April, 1660
Paradise Lost	August ?, 1667
Accidence Commenced Grammar	1669
History of Britain	1670
Paradise Regained	1671
Samson Agonistes	1671
Of True Religion, Heresy, Schism	1673
Second edition of the *Minor Poems*	1673

[1] See note, p. lxxxii.

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F. of C. *Forcers of Conscience.*
Il P. *Il Penseroso.*
L'A. *L'Allegro.*
Lyc. *Lycidas.*
N. O. *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity.*
P. L. *Paradise Lost.*
P. R. *Paradise Regained.*
Ps. Translation of certain *Psalms.*
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S. A. *Samson Agonistes.*

OF EDUCATION[1]

TO MASTER SAMUEL HARTLIB[2]

Master Hartlib, —

I am long since persuaded that to say or do aught worth memory and imitation, no purpose or respect[3] should sooner move us than simply the love of God, and of mankind. Nevertheless to write now the reforming of education, though it be one of the greatest and noblest designs that can be thought on, and for the want whereof this nation perishes, I had not yet at this time been induced, but by your earnest entreaties and serious conjurements; as having my mind for the present half diverted in the pursuance of some other assertions,[4] the knowledge

[1] Published June 5, 1644, probably by Milton himself rather than by Hartlib.

[2] Samuel H. Hartlib (1600 ?–1670 ?), born at Elbing in Prussia, was the son of a Polish father and an English mother. About 1628 he settled as a merchant in London. He is one of the most interesting figures of the seventeenth century, because he constantly occupied himself with questions of public reform; he was what would now be called a philanthropist. He aided John Durie in a scheme for bringing about the union of all the Protestant churches of Europe; he was a warm friend of Comenius, with whose educational views he wholly sympathized; and he was concerned in several projects for the improvement of agriculture in England. His own writings consist of essays and prefaces on these three subjects; and on these questions he had corresponded with, and probably interviewed, most of the influential and learned men of his time. Moreover, he planned a school for the sons of gentlemen, and it was probably in connection with this that he asked for Milton's ideas on education.

[3] **respect**: consideration.

[4] **assertions**: statements, arguments. This doubtless refers

and the use of which cannot but be a great futherance both to the enlargement of truth, and honest living with much more peace.[1] Nor should the laws of any private friendship have prevailed with me to divide thus, or transpose my former thoughts, but that I see those aims, those actions, which have won you with me the esteem of a person sent hither by some good providence from a far country to be the occasion and the incitement of great good[2] to this island.

And, as I hear, you have obtained the same repute with men of most approved wisdom, and some of highest authority among us; not to mention the learned correspondence which you hold in foreign parts, and the extraordinary pains and diligence which you have used in this matter, both here and beyond the seas; either by the definite will of God so ruling, or the peculiar sway of nature, which also is God's working.[3] Neither can I think that, so reputed and so valued as you are, you would, to the forfeit of your own discerning ability, impose upon me an unfit and overponderous argument; but that the satisfaction which you profess to have received, from those incidental discourses[4] which we have wandered into, hath

to the pamphlets on Divorce and the *Areopagitica;* for the dates of their publication, see p. lxxxiv.

[1] **peace**: household peace, of course.

[2] Had it not been for the disturbances of the Civil War, these expectations might, perhaps, have been fulfilled. Comenius had come to England on Hartlib's invitation, but Milton seems to have had more faith in Hartlib than in Comenius.

[3] "to serve whom God ordains
Or Nature; God and Nature bid the same."
P. L. VI, 175–76; see also XI, 49.

[4] It is not known when the acquaintance between Milton and Hartlib began, nor how close it came to be.

pressed and almost constrained you into a persuasion,[1] that what you require from me in this point, I neither ought, nor can in conscience, defer beyond this time both of so much need at once, and so much opportunity to try what God hath determined.

I will not resist, therefore, whatever it is, either of divine or human obligement, that you lay upon me; but will forthwith set down in writing, as you request me, that voluntary idea, which hath long, in silence, presented itself to me, of a better education, in extent and comprehension far more large, and yet of time far shorter, and of attainment far more certain,[2] than hath been yet in practice. Brief I shall endeavor to be; for that which I have to say, assuredly this nation hath extreme need should be done sooner than spoken.[3] To tell you, therefore, what I have benefited herein among old renowned authors, I shall spare; and to search what many modern Januas and Didactics,[4] more than ever I shall read, have projected, my

[1] **persuasion**: settled conviction.

[2] Note the three points in which he expects education to gain by the system he proposes.

[3] Milton speaks always with respect of his tutor, Young, and of his instruction at St. Paul's under Doctor Gill; but he is severely critical of the whole University system. Of Cambridge he writes: "Which as in the time of her better health, and mine own younger judgment, I never greatly admired, so now much less." — *P. W.* III, 112.

[4] John Amos Comenius (1592–1671) was born in Moràvia and educated in Germany. He devoted his life to writing on subjects of education, and so famous did his books become that they were translated into all the languages of Europe. While he was in London, September, 1641, to August, 1642, the Parliament asked him to become a member of a Commission for the reform of education; but the approaching war prevented the carrying-out of this design and hastened his departure from the country. Sweden then called him to outline a school system for

inclination leads me not. But if you can accept of these few observations which have flowered off, and are as it were the burnishing of many studious and contemplative years, altogether spent in the search of religious and civil knowledge, and such as pleased you so well in the relating, I here give you them to dispose of.

The end then of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the highest perfection.[1] But because our understanding cannot in this body found itself but on sensible things,[2] nor arrive so

the nation; upon which plan he spent many years of his life. The two works referred to here are: *Janua Linguarum Reserata* (pub. 1631), which gives in detail a method of teaching foreign languages in a very short time, and *Didactica Magna* (Hartlib published an abstract of this in London, 1639), the larger treatise of the two. This last develops an educational scheme divided into four parts, embracing the life of the child from (1) *The Infant School, or Mother's own School*, through (2) *The Vernacular Public School;* (3) *The Latin School, or Gymnasium;* and (4) *The University (with Travel)*; that is, from one to twenty-five years of age. It is, moreover, to be for all, rich and poor, male and female, in every community, town, and village; it is based, in method and order of subjects studied, on the laws of nature, and natural inclination in the child; and finally it is to have always in view the useful purpose of fitting the student for the work of life. Milton's own plan leads us to believe that he was influenced by Comenius, although he here appears to speak disparagingly of these books.

[1] Observe that the end of education is the moral regeneration of man.

[2] The keynote of Milton's teaching is the learning of *things* through the *senses;* the mind should master the particular before it assays the universal. In this he agrees perfectly with Comenius.

clearly to the knowledge of God and things invisible, as by orderly conning over the visible and inferior creature, the same method is necessarily to be followed in all discreet teaching. And seeing every nation affords not experience and tradition enough for all kinds of learning, therefore we are chiefly taught the languages of those people who have at any time been most industrious after wisdom; so that language is but the instrument conveying to us things useful to be known.[1] And though a linguist should pride himself to have all the tongues that Babel cleft the world into, yet if he have not studied the solid things in them, as well as the words and lexicons, he were nothing so much to be esteemed a learned man[2] as any yeoman or tradesman competently wise in his mother dialect only.

Hence appear the many mistakes which have made learning generally so unpleasing and so unsuccessful; first, we do amiss to spend seven or eight years merely in scraping together so much miserable Latin and Greek, as might be learned otherwise easily and delightfully in one year. And that which casts our proficiency therein so much behind, is our time lost partly in too oft idle vacancies[3] given both

[1] The study of languages has in itself no disciplinary value, but is desirable for a purely practical purpose. Comenius says: "Languages are acquired, not as a part of learning or wisdom, but as instrumental to the reception and communication of learning. Accordingly, it is not *all* languages that are to be learnt — but only those that are *necessary*." — Quoted by Masson, III, 210.

[2] Cf. *P. R.* IV, 321–30.

[3] **vacancies**: probably not the regular long vacation periods of the year, but the frequently occurring Saints days, which were always holidays.

to schools and universities; partly in a preposterous[1] exaction, forcing the empty wits of children to compose themes, verses, and orations, which are the acts of ripest judgment, and the final work of a head filled by long reading and observing, with elegant maxims and copious invention.[2] These are not matters to be wrung from poor striplings, like blood out of the nose, or the plucking of untimely fruit. Besides the ill habit which they get of wretched barbarizing[3] against the Latin and Greek idiom, with their untutored[4] Anglicisms, odious to be read, yet not to be avoided without a well-continued and judicious conversing among[5] pure authors digested, which they scarce taste. Whereas, if after some preparatory grounds of speech by their certain forms got into memory, they were led to the praxis thereof in some chosen short book lessoned thoroughly to them, they might then forthwith proceed to learn the substance of good things, and arts[6] in due order, which would bring the

[1] **preposterous**: inverted in order or position. Here the meaning is, having first that which should come last.

[2] **invention**: inventiveness, or, possibly, the ability to see topics for treatment.

[3] **barbarizing**: writing like a Barbarian, one ignorant of the classic languages.

[4] **untutored**: crude, raw. "My untutored lines" Shakespeare's *Dedication to Lucrece*; see also *II Henry VI*, III, ii, 213.

[5] **conversing among**: being familiar with. See *P. L.* II, 184.

[6] **arts**: the branches of learning included in a liberal education; originally these were the "Seven Liberal Arts" divided into the Trivium: *Grammar*, *Logic*, *Rhetoric*, and the Quadrivium: *Arithmetic*, *Geometry*, *Astronomy*, *Music*. A statute of Elizabeth slightly modified this to: *Rhetoric*, *Logic*, *Philosophy* for the B.A. degree, and *Philosophy*, *Astronomy*, *Perspective*, *Greek* for the M.A. degree. By Milton's time there was the further change of requiring *Greek*, *Arithmetic*, and a little *Science* during the years leading to the B.A. degree.

whole language quickly into their power. This I take to be the most rational and most profitable way of learning languages, and whereby we may best hope to give account to God of our youth spent herein.

And for the usual method of teaching arts, I deem it to be an old error of universities, not yet well recovered from the scholastic grossness of barbarous ages, that instead of beginning with arts most easy (and those be such as are most obvious to the sense), they present their young unmatriculated[1] novices, at first coming with the most intellective[2] abstractions of logic[3] and metaphysics; so that they having but newly left those grammatic flats and shallows, where they stuck unreasonably to learn a few words with lamentable construction, and now on the sudden transported under another climate, to be tossed and turmoiled with their unballasted wits in fathomless and unquiet deeps of controversy, do for the most part grow into hatred and contempt of learning, mocked and deluded all this while with ragged[4] notions and babblements, while they expected worthy and delightful knowledge; till poverty or youthful years[5] call them importunately their several ways, and hasten them, with the sway of friends, either to an ambitious and mercenary, or ignorantly zealous divinity:[6] some

[1] **unmatriculated** : probably, immature.

[2] **intellective** : apprehensible, not by the senses, but by the intellect alone.

[3] **logic** : dialectic. See the *N. E. D.*

[4] **ragged** : rugged.

[5] **youthful years** : the restlessness or impatience of youth.

[6] Milton's opinion of the clergy is : "Who style themselves ambassadors of Jesus Christ, and seem to be his tithe-gatherers, though an office of their own setting up to his dishonour, his exactors, his publicans rather." *P. W.* III, 34. "For our religion, where was there a more ignorant, profane, and vicious clergy,

allured to the trade of law, grounding their purposes not on the prudent[1] and heavenly contemplation of justice and equity, which was never taught them, but on the promising and pleasing thoughts of litigious terms, fat contentions, and flowing fees; others betake them to state affairs, with souls so unprincipled in virtue and true generous breeding, that flattery and courtships and tyrranous aphorisms appear to them the highest points of wisdom; instilling their barren hearts with a conscientious slavery;[2] if, as I rather think, it be not feigned. Others, lastly, of a more delicious[3] and airy[4] spirit, retire themselves (knowing no better) to the enjoyments of ease and luxury, living out their days in feast and jollity; which indeed is the wisest and the safest course[5] of all these, unless they were with more integrity undertaken. And these are the fruits of misspending our prime youth at the schools and universities as we do, either in learning mere words, or such things chiefly as were better unlearned.

I shall detain you no longer in the demonstration of what we should not do, but straight conduct you to a hillside, where I will point you out the right path of a virtuous and noble education; laborious indeed at the first ascent, but else so smooth, so green, so full

learned in nothing but the antiquity of their pride, their covetousness, and superstition? whose unsincere and leavenous doctrine, corrupting the people, first taught them looseness, then bondage; loosening them from all sound knowledge and strictness of life." — *P. W.* I, 382. See also *P. W.* IV, 460; *Lyc.* 113–31.

[1] **prudent**: provident, foreseeing.

[2] **conscientious slavery**: a slavery considered as a duty.

[3] **delicious**: luxurious, dainty.

[4] **airy**: merry, gay.

[5] See *Lyc.* 67–69.

of goodly prospect, and melodious sounds on every side, that the harp of Orpheus[1] was not more charming.[2] I doubt not but you shall have more ado to drive our dullest and laziest youth, our stocks and stubs,[3] from the infinite desire of such a happy nurture, than we have now to hale and drag our choicest and hopefullest wits to that asinine feast of sow-thistles and brambles,[4] which is commonly set before them as all the food and entertainment of their tenderest and most docible age. I call, therefore, a complete and generous education, that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war.[5] And how all this may be done between twelve and one-and-twenty, less time than is now bestowed in pure trifling at grammar and sophistry, is to be thus ordered.

First, to find out a spacious house and ground about it fit for an academy, and big enough to lodge

[1] See *L'A.* 145; *Il P.* 105; Shakespeare, *Henry VIII*, III, i, 3: *Merchant of Venice*, V, i, 80; also p. 16, n. 8.

[2] "How charming is divine Philosophy!" *Comus*, 476.

[3] "And all about old stockes and stubs of trees," *F. Q.* I, ix, 34.

[4] "their honest and ingenuous natures coming to the universities to store themselves with good and solid learning, and there unfortunately fed with nothing else but the scragged and thorny lectures of monkish and miserable sophistry, were sent home again with such a scholastic bur in their throats, as hath stopped and hindered all true and generous philosophy from entering." — *P. W.* II, 504.

[5] Worthy to be memorized as one of the noblest definitions of education; observe that the purpose is to render the man more *useful* in public and in private. Plato (*Laws*, I, 643) says education is that "which makes a man eagerly pursue the ideal perfection of citizenship, and teaches him how rightly to rule and how to obey." Again (*Ibid.* 641), "But if you ask what is the good of education in general, the answer is easy; that education makes good men, and that good men act nobly."

a hundred and fifty persons, whereof twenty or thereabout may be attendants, all under the government of one, who shall be thought of desert sufficient, and ability either to do all, or wisely to direct and oversee it done. This place should be at once both school and university, not needing a remove to any other house of scholarship, except it be some peculiar college[1] of law, or physic, where they mean to be practitioners; but as for those general studies which take up all our time from Lily[2] to the commencing,[3] as they term it, master of art, it should be absolute. After this pattern, as many edifices may be converted to this use as shall be needful in every city throughout this land, which would tend much to the increase of learning and civility[4] everywhere. This number, less or more thus collected, to the convenience of a foot company, or interchangeably two troops of cavalry, should divide their day's work into three parts as it lies orderly: their studies, their exercise, and their diet.

For their studies: first, they should begin with the chief and necessary rules of some good grammar,[5]

[1] The technical and professional schools are not to be a part of the university.

[2] **Lily** = the Beginning Book in Latin. William Lily (1468 ?–1522) was the first headmaster of St. Paul's School. "Lilly's own Latin grammar — the foundation of all the Latin grammars that have since been used in England — was published in 1513 specially for the scholars of St. Paul's." — MASSON, I, 48.

[3] **commencing**: taking the degree of.

[4] **civility**: culture, refinement. See *N. E. D.*

[5] That is, Latin grammar. There is no provision for the study of English or for any text-books in English; all knowledge is to be gained through foreign languages.

Comenius says: "We desire and protest that studies of wisdom be no longer committed to Latin alone, and kept shut up in

either that now used, or any better; and while this is doing, their speech is to be fashioned to a distinct and clear pronunciation,[1] as near as may be to the Italian, especially in the vowels. For we Englishmen being far northerly, do not open our mouths in the cold air wide enough to grace a southern tongue; but are observed by all other nations to speak exceeding close and inward, so that to smatter[2] Latin with an English mouth, is as ill a hearing as law French. Next, to make them expert in the usefullest points of grammar, and withal to season[3] them and win them early to the love of virtue and true labor, ere any flattering seducement or vain principle seize them wandering, some easy and delightful book of education would be

the schools, as has hitherto been done, to the greatest contempt and injury of the people at large and of the popular tongues. Let all things be delivered to each nation in its own speech." — Quoted by Quick, 159.

"Milton was a realist who sought the study of reality, in so far as realism entered into his system, in the ancients, whereas Comenius sought for the study of reality as modern science presented it, including the ancients or abridgments of their works, only in so far as they were necessary and accessory." — *Ibid.* 160.

[1] "At my first sitting to read to him (Milton), observing that I used the English pronunciation, he told me, if I would have the benefit of the Latin tongue, not only to read and understand Latin authors, but to converse with foreigners, either abroad or at home, I must learn the foreign pronunciation. To this I consenting, he instructed me how to sound the vowels; so different from the common pronunciation used by the English, who speak Anglice their Latin, that — with some few other variations in sounding some consonants in particular cases, as *c* before *e* or *i* like *ch*, *sc* before *i* like *sh*, etc.— the Latin thus spoken seemed as different from that which was delivered, as the English generally speak it, as if it were another language." — *The History of Thomas Ellwood written by Himself*, Morley's Universal Library, 134–35.

[2] **smatter**: see Skeat, *Etymological Dictionary*.

[3] **season**: mature, ripen, or perhaps imbue. See *P. L.* x, 609.

read[1] to them, whereof the Greeks have store, as Cebes.[2] Plutarch,[3] and other Socratic discourses. But in Latin we have none of classic authority extant, except the two or three first books of Quintilian,[4] and some select pieces elsewhere.

But here the main skill and groundwork will be, to temper them such lectures and explanations, upon every opportunity, as may lead and draw them in willing obedience, inflamed with the study of learning and the admiration of virtue; stirred up with high hopes of living to be brave men, and worthy patriots, dear to God, and famous to all ages. That they may despise and scorn all their childish and ill-taught qualities, to delight in manly and liberal exercises, which he who hath the art and proper eloquence to catch

[1] Doubtless in Latin translations.

[2] **Cebes** of Thebes, a disciple of Socrates (see the *Phædo*), the author of the Πίναξ (*Table*), a popular book in the seventeenth century. It contains a philosophical explanation of an allegorical picture or table. This table, expounded by an old man to some youths, shows that in a previous existence man had been given laws to guide his conduct, but the drink of oblivion as he passed to the present state made him forget these wise rules; now he is tempted to all kinds of vice, and must win virtue and happiness by patience, endurance, and learning.

[3] **Plutarch** (50 ?–125 ? A.D.) of Chæronea in Bœotia. His most famous work is the *Parallel Lives*, authentic biographies, written in pairs, of a Greek and a Roman who have something in common, either in time or political career, permitting them to be considered together. But Milton probably meant some part of the *Moral Works*; these are treatises, often in the form of Socratic dialogues, on a large variety of subjects. The first *On the Education of Children* is perhaps the one recommended for reading.

[4] **Quintilian** (35 ?–95 ? A.D.), a native of Spain; he was for twenty years head of the foremost school of oratory at Rome. His chief work is *Institutio Oratoria*, the first two books of which are devoted to setting forth his plan for the education of youth.

them with, what with mild and effectual persuasions, and what with the intimation of some fear, if need be, but chiefly by his own example,[1] might in a short space gain them to an incredible diligence and courage, infusing into their young breasts such an ingenuous and noble ardor, as would not fail to make many of them renowned and matchless men. At the same time, some other hour of the day, might be taught them the rules of arithmetic; and soon after the elements of geometry, even playing,[2] as the old manner was. After evening repast, till bedtime, their thoughts would be best taken up in the easy grounds of religion, and the story of scripture.

The next step would be to the authors[3] of agricul-

[1] Note the emphasis upon the personal influence of the teacher.

[2] **playing**: "I have said elsewhere of Roman education (*Ed. Theor.* p. 21), 'Next to reading and writing came reckoning, the fingers were made great use of, each joint and bend of the finger was made to signify a certain value, and the pupil was expected to follow the twinkling motion of the teacher's hands as he represented number after number. The modern Italian game of *Mora* is a survival of this capacity.' Plato more than once represents Socrates as giving lessons in Geometry to young Greeks in the Palæstra." O. B. 33.

[3] **Cato** the Censor (234–149 B.C.). His *De Re Rustica* is the only work which exists entire; the first part of it is an exposition of the best means of cultivating the soil; this is followed by a large number of receipts, rules for housekeeping, formulas for sales and leases, for sacrifices and domestic medicine.

Varro (116–27 B.C.), a writer of extensive learning and of great versatility. He wrote six hundred and twenty books on poetry, history, oratory, philosophy, and many other subjects. Three of these are on *Rerum Rusticarum*; the first treats of agriculture, the second of cattle, the third of bird and fish-breeding. They are in the form of dialogues, full of vivid scenes and witty observations.

Columella (first century A.D.) wrote twelve books, *De Re Rustica*, which form a systematic treatise on all branches re-

ture, Cato, Varro, and Columella, for the matter is most easy; and if the language be difficult, so much the better, it is not a difficulty above their years. And here will be an occasion of inciting, and enabling them hereafter to improve the tillage of their country, to recover the bad soil, and to remedy the waste that is made of good; for this was one of Hercules' praises. Ere half these authors be read (which will soon be with plying hard and daily) they cannot choose but be masters of any ordinary prose. So that it will be then seasonable for them to learn in any modern author the use of the globes, and all the maps, first, with the old names, and then with the new;[1] or they might be then capable to read any compendious method of natural philosophy.

And at the same time might be entering into the Greek tongue, after the same manner as was before prescribed in the Latin; whereby the difficulties of grammar being soon overcome, all the historical physiology of Aristotle[2] and Theophrastus[3] are open be-

lating to farming, and are classics on the subject. The tenth book, on gardening, is in verse after the manner of Virgil's *Georgics*.

[1] "This mode of studying geography has since been adopted, particularly at Eton, where, with the help of Arrowsmith's *Comparative Atlas*, in which the ancient and modern maps of countries are bound up face to face, a lad may quickly acquire a knowledge of at least the elements of this useful science." *P. W.* III, 469 (note).

[2] Aristotle (384–322 B.C.). The *Natural History of Animals* is referred to.

[3] Theophrastus (372–287 B.C.), a pupil of Aristotle, and his follower in the leadership of the Peripatetic School. The most important of his numerous works that remain are, *On the History of Plants* in nine books, and *Principles of Vegetable Life* in six books. These are the most significant works on botanical science before modern times.

fore them, and, as I may say, under contribution. The like access will be to Vitruvius;[1] to Seneca's[2] natural questions, to Mela,[3] Celsus,[4] Pliny,[5] or Solinus.[6] And having thus passed the principles of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and geography with a general compact of physics, they may descend in mathematics to the instrumental science of trigonometry, and from thence to fortification, architecture, enginery,[7] or navigation. And in natural philosophy they may proceed leisurely from the history of meteors, minerals, plants, and living creatures, as far as anatomy.

Then also in course might be read to them, out of

[1] **Vitruvius**, who lived in the time of Augustus, wrote ten books, *De Architectura*. This is the only treatise on the subject remaining from classic ages. It is full of learned and practical knowledge, and from the time of its revival in the early Renaissance it has had great influence upon architecture.

[2] **Seneca** (4 B.C.–65 A.D.), whose *Naturalium Questionum*, in seven books, deals chiefly with meteorology and astronomy. It was, although merely an unscientific collection of facts from Greeks and Roman authors, used during the Middle Ages as a text-book of science.

[3] Pomponius **Mela** (first century A.D.) wrote three books *De Chorographia*; this is the earliest extant account of the ancient world, and the only systematic treatise on geography that remains in the Latin language.

[4] A. Cornelius **Celsus** (probably first century A.D.) wrote on many subjects, but there remain only the eight books, *De Medicina*, which give an account of the whole medical system of the time.

[5] **Pliny** the Elder (23–79 A.D.) wrote *Naturalis Historia*, in thirty-seven books; it is a compilation of natural science, and also includes the subjects of geography, medicine, and the history of art.

[6] **Solinus** (probably first half of third century A.D.) wrote *Collecteana Rerum Memorabilium*, which consists chiefly of selections from Pliny, amplified and arranged from a geographical point of view.

[7] **enginery**: engineering.

some not tedious writer, the institution of physic,[1] that they may know the tempers, the humors,[2] the seasons,[3] and how to manage a crudity;[4] which he who can wisely and timely do, is not only a great physician to himself and to his friends, but also may, at some time or other, save an army by this frugal and expenseless means only; and not let the healthy and stout bodies of young men rot away under him for want of this discipline; which is a great pity, and no less a shame to the commander. To set forward all these proceedings[5] in nature and mathematics, what hinders but that they may procure, as often as shall be needful, the helpful experiences[6] of hunters, fowlers, fishermen, shepherds, gardeners, apothecaries; and in the other sciences, architects, engineers, mariners, anatomists; who doubtless would be ready, some for reward, and some to favor such a hopeful seminary. And this will give them such a real tincture of natural knowledge,[7] as they shall never forget, but daily augment with delight. Then also those poets[8] which are

[1] **institution of physic**: elements or first principles of medicine.

[2] **humors**: the physiology of the Middle Ages taught that there were four fluids or *humors* in the body: blood, phlegm, choler, and melancholy or black bile; and the relative proportion of each determined the disposition or temperament (*temper*) of the person. See *Comus*, 810; *S. A.* 600.

[3] **seasons**: the way in which the different seasons affect the health of the body.

[4] **crudity**: indigestion.

[5] **proceedings**: goings forward, steps in advance.

[6] We are now, in our universities, beginning to ask the aid of those who have had practical experience.

[7] **natural knowledge**: the knowledge of nature.

[8] **Orpheus**, a mythic poet of Thrace, to whom have been attributed the *Argonautica*, an epic poem relating the story of the Argonauts; over eighty *Hymns* of the Neo-Platonic school;

now counted most hard, will be both facile and pleasant, Orpheus, Hesiod, Theocritus, Aratus, Nicander, Oppian, Dionysius; and in Latin, Lucretius, Manilius, and the rural part of Virgil.

the *Lithica*, a poem in hexameters telling the properties of stones and how to use them in divination; and fragments of a *Theogony*. It is doubtless the third of these that Milton here refers to.

Hesiod (about 735 B.C.), one of the earliest poets of Greece. The chief poems said to have been written by him are the *Works and Days*, which consist of ethical precepts about honest labor, of rules for farming, and of a calendar for the months, with the days lucky for the farmer indicated; and a *Theogony*, containing the story of creation and of the birth of the gods.

Theocritus (first half of third century B.C.), the pastoral poet of Syracuse. Of his poems there remain twenty-nine of the *Idyls*, and a few *Epigrams*.

Aratus (about 270 B.C.), the author of two astronomical poems, *Phenomena* and *Prognostica*. It is from the former that St. Paul quotes in Acts XVII, 28.

Nicander (probably second century B.C.); of his writings there are left only two poems, *Theriaca*, which treats of venomous animals and the wounds inflicted by them; and *Alexipharmaca*, giving a list of poisons and their antidotes.

Oppian (latter part of second and beginning of third century A.D.); in Milton's time considered the author of two poems *Haliutica*, setting forth the joys of fishing; and *Cynegetica*, in praise of hunting. The poems have been, since the eighteenth century, attributed to two different hands.

Dionysius (probably fourth century A.D.), the writer of *Periegesis*, a poem describing the whole earth as then known.

Lucretius (96?–55 B.C.), the author of the famous poem in six books, *De Rerum Natura*. The avowed purpose of the writer is didactic, to free the human mind from a superstitious belief in the gods.

Manilius (probably last century B.C.), the so-called author of *Astronomica*, a poem, of which five books remain, treating more of astrology than of astronomy.

Virgil, the "rural part" would be the *Ecloga* and *Georgicon*.

By this time,[1] years and good general precepts will have furnished them more distinctly with that act of reason which in ethics is called Proairesis,[2] that they may with some judgment contemplate upon moral good and evil. Then will be required a special reinforcement of constant and sound indoctrinating, to set them right and firm, instructing them more amply in the knowledge of virtue and the hatred of vice; while their young and pliant affections are led through all the moral works[3] of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, Plutarch, Laertius, and those Locrian remnants; but still to be reduced[4] in their nightward studies wherewith they close the day's work, under the determinate[5] sentence of David or Solomon, or the evangels[6] and apostolic scriptures. Being perfect in the knowledge of personal duty, they may then begin the study of economics.[7] And either now or before this, they may

[1] The student is now about fifteen or sixteen years old. Review what he has accomplished in subjects and authors in these three or four years. His moral nature is next to be the object of training.

[2] **Proairesis** : the deliberate choice between right and wrong.

[3] **Plato, Xenophon, Cicero** : what works of these authors does he refer to, as books fitted for moral instruction?

Plutarch : now to be read in Greek. See p. 12, n. 3.

Diogenes **Laertius** (probably second century A.D.), the author of a *History of Philosophy;* this has, for a long time, been the foundation of most modern histories of ancient philosophy.

Timæus of Locri was the reputed teacher of Plato and author of a work *On the Soul of the World.* It has now been shown that this could not have been written earlier than the first century A.D.

[4] **reduced** : led back.

[5] **determinate** : definitive, final. Shakespeare, *Henry VIII,* II, iv, 176.

[6] **evangels** : the Gospels.

[7] **economics** : the student is now to study his duty to others.

have easily learned, at any odd hour, the Italian tongue. And soon after, but with wariness and good antidote, it would be wholesome enough to let them taste some choice comedies, Greek, Latin, or Italian ; those tragedies, also, that treat of household matters, as Trachiniæ,[1] Alcestis, and the like.

The next remove must be to the study of politics;[2] to know the beginning, end, and reasons of political societies; that they may not, in a dangerous fit of the commonwealth, be such poor, shaken, uncertain reeds, of such a tottering conscience, as many of our great counsellors[3] have lately shewn themselves, but steadfast pillars of the state. After this, they are to dive into the grounds of law, and legal justice; delivered first and with best warrant by Moses; and as far as human prudence can be trusted, in those extolled remains of Grecian lawgivers,[4] Lycurgus, Solon, Zaleucus, Charondas, and thence to all the Roman edicts[5] and tables[6] with their Jus-

[1] **Trachiniæ** of Sophocles ; the **Alcestis** of Euripides. Both plays present the suffering and sacrifice of a faithful wife for her husband.

[2] The third step is the study of the student's relation to the state.

[3] The war between King and Parliament had begun two years before, and there must have been many instances of a change of sides among counsellors.

[4] **Lycurgus**, the lawgiver of Sparta ; **Solon** of Athens ; **Zaleucus** (middle of eighth century B.C.) gave laws to the Locrians, who had settled in the extreme southwestern part of Italy ; **Charondas** (494–476 ? B.C.) was the lawgiver of Catana, his own city in Sicily, and of other cities of Sicily and Italy.

[5] **Roman edicts** : the rules by which a prætor declared he would be guided during his term of office ; these rules renewed year by year gradually came to form a large part of the body of Roman law.

[6] **tables** : the Twelve Tables containing the laws of Rome ;

tinian:[1] and so down to the Saxon and common laws of England, and the statutes.

Sundays also and every evening may be now understandingly spent in the highest matters of theology, and church history,[2] ancient and modern; and ere this time the Hebrew tongue at a set hour[3] might have been gained, that the Scriptures may be now read in their own original; whereto it would be no impossibility to add the Chaldee and the Syrian dialect.[4] When all these employments are well conquered, then will the choice histories, heroic poems, and Attic tragedies of stateliest and most regal argument, with all the

these laws were engraved (about 450 B.C.) on bronze, and "until the time of Cicero they were learnt by heart in the schools." — T. and S. I, 115.

[1] **Justinian** the Great (483–565 A.D.), the Emperor of Rome and the codifier of the Roman law; his two great collections of laws are the *Institutes* and the *Digest*.

[2] The speculations of theology and the history of the organization of the church, are to accompany the study of politics and law.

[3] **at a set hour**: in contrast with the way Italian is to be acquired.

[4] **the Chaldee and the Syrian dialect**: Aramaic (sometimes called Chaldee) was the dialect of Syria and Mesopotamia, the commercial language of the East, and the common speech of Palestine in the time of Christ. Hebrew had ceased to exist as a spoken language about the fifth century B.C., and the Hebrews, after the return from captivity in Babylon, used Aramaic as their vernacular; this change was doubtless facilitated by the fact that they had become familiar with a dialect of Aramaic (called Chaldee in the Old Testament, Dan. I, 4) spoken in that country. Syriac, often called Christian Aramaic, was a dialect of Aramaic in use in the city of Edessa, the centre of early Christianity. The Church adopted this language, and in Syriac were written the earliest known manuscripts of the New Testament. See F. C. Kenyon, *Handbook to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, 126; also A. H. Sayce, *Introduction to the Science of Language*, 171.

famous political orations, offer themselves;[1] which if they were not only read, but some of them got by memory, and solemnly pronounced with right accent and grace, as might be taught, would endue them even with the spirit and vigor of Demosthenes or Cicero, Euripides or Sophocles.

And now, lastly,[2] will be the time to read with them those organic[3] arts, which enable men to discourse and write perspicuously, elegantly, and according to the fittest style, of lofty, mean,[4] or lowly. Logic,[5] therefore, so much as is useful, is to be referred to this due place with all her well-couched heads and topics, until it be time to open her contracted palm into a graceful and ornate rhetoric, taught out of the rule[6]

[1] Doubtless the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides; the **heroic poems** are of course the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and the *Æneid*; the **Attic tragedies** are probably the Trilogy of Æschylus and the Œdipus plays of Sophocles; the **orations** of Demosthenes and Cicero.

[2] **lastly**: composition and elocution or public-speaking are to come *last*.

[3] **organic**: serving as a means to an end.

[4] **mean**: medium.

[5] **Logic**: note the limitation on the study of logic; it, too, must be under the ruling principle of *usefulness*. "Logic was compared by Aristotle and others to a close fist, rhetoric to an open palm. Cicero, *De Finibus*, II, 6." — O. B.

[6] **Plato** discusses the question of rhetoric in the latter part of the *Phædrus*. **Aristotle**, the *Rhetoric*.

Demetrius **Phalereus** (345–283 B.C.), the last of the popular orators of Athens. The only one of his many works remaining is that on *Elocution*; it is now believed to be by a later hand.

Cicero, *Rhetorica*.

Hermogenes (second half of second century A.D.), the Greek rhetorician; his five remaining works, containing a system of rhetoric, were for a long time used as manuals in the schools.

Longinus (213–273), the famous Greek critic and philosopher to whom the treatise *On the Sublime* has been attributed.

of Plato, Aristotle, Phalereus, Cicero, Hermogenes, Longinus. To which poetry would be made subsequent, or indeed rather precedent, as being less subtle and fine, but more simple, sensuous, and passionate.[1] I mean not here the prosody of a verse, which they could not but have hit on before among the rudiments of grammar; but that sublime art which in Aristotle's poetics, in Horace,[2] and the Italian commentaries[3] of Castelvetro, Tasso, Mazzoni, and others, teaches what the laws of a true epic poem, what of a dramatic, what of a lyric, what decorum[4] is, which is the grand masterpiece[5] to observe. This would make them soon perceive what despicable creatures our common rhymers and play-writers be;[6] and show them what religious, what glorious and magnificent use might be made of poetry, both in divine and human things.

From hence, and not till now, will be the right season of forming them to be able writers and com-

[1] Observe that this oft-quoted definition of poetry is not really a definition, but rather a comparison between poetry and rhetoric.

[2] **Horace**: *Ars Poetica.*

[3] Ludovico **Castelvetro** (1505–71) published at Vienna in 1570 an Italian translation of Aristotle's *Poetics* accompanied by a critical Exposition. Hallam (*Literature of Europe*, II, 296) says, "It may justly claim respect, not only as the earliest exposition of the theory of criticism, but for its acuteness, erudition, and independence of reasoning." But see Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy*, V. 250.

Tasso set forth his opinions and theories regarding poetry in a prose treatise of six books, entitled *Discourses on Epic Poetry.*

Jacobo **Mazzoni** (1548–98), a friend of Tasso's, is best known by his *Defence of the Divina Commedia of Dante;* his book was widely known and influential in its time.

[4] **decorum**: fitness in writing.

[5] **grand masterpiece**: the chief point.

[6] What play-writers is he here condemning?

posers in every excellent matter, when they shall be thus fraught with an universal insight into things. Or whether they be to speak in parliament or council, honor and attention would be waiting on their lips. There would then also appear in pulpits other visage, other gestures, and stuff otherwise wrought than what we now sit under,[1] ofttimes to as great a trial of our patience as any other that they preach to us. These are the studies wherein our noble and our gentle youth ought to bestow their time, in a disciplinary way, from twelve to one-and-twenty: unless they rely more upon their ancestors dead, than upon themselves living. In which methodical course it is so supposed they must proceed by the steady pace of learning onward, as at convenient times, for memory's sake, to retire back into the middle ward,[2] and sometimes into the rear of what they have been taught, until they have confirmed and solidly united the whole body of their perfected knowledge, like the embattling[3] of a Roman legion. Now will be worth the seeing, what exercises and recreations may best agree, and become these studies.

The course of study hitherto briefly described is, what I can guess by reading, likest to those ancient and famous schools[4] of Pythagoras, Plato, Isocrates,

[1] **we now sit under**: "that men should sit all their life long at the feet of a pulpited divine . . . a lollard indeed over his elbow cushion . . . teaching here and there at random out of this or that text, as his ease or fancy, and ofttimes as his stealth guides him."—*P. W.* III, 24.

[2] **ward** = guard; compare vanguard, rearguard. See Skeat, *Etymological Dictionary*.

[3] **embattling**: see *P. L.* VI, 16; XII, 213.

[4] **famous schools**: the group of disciples whom **Pythagoras** (529 B.C.) gathered about him at Cotrona in southeastern Italy, and to whom he taught his philosophy; the famous *Academy* founded by **Plato** at Athens 387 B.C.; **Isocrates**, whom Cicero

Aristotle, and such others, out of which were bred such a number of renowned philosophers, orators, historians, poets, and princes all over Greece, Italy, and Asia, besides the flourishing studies[1] of Cyrene and Alexandria. But herein it shall exceed them, and supply a defect as great as that which Plato noted in the commonwealth of Sparta,[2] whereas that city trained up their youth most for war, and these in their academies and Lyceum all for the gown,[3] this institution of breeding which I here delineate shall be equally good both for peace and war. Therefore about an hour and a half ere they eat at noon should be allowed them for exercise, and due rest afterwards; but the time for this may be enlarged at pleasure according as their rising in the morning shall be early.

The exercise which I commend first, is the exact use

calls the father of eloquence (*De Orat.* II, 3, and 22) established about 392 B.C. a school of rhetoric at Athens; the school in the Lyceum at Athens where **Aristotle** (about 335 B.C.) walked up and down the avenues of shade-trees and taught his philosophy to his pupils.

[1] **studies**: Cyrene was noted for a school of medicine, and for its keen intellectual life. Alexandria was famous throughout the world from 396–30 B.C. as the home of literature and science, the former characterized by profound learning and untiring research, but by little originality. After the cultivation of literature had passed to Rome, there arose in Alexandria (about 30 B.C.) the well-known Neo-Platonic school of philosophy, which until about 640 A.D. made the city the centre of philosophic thought. The Greek poets mentioned after Hesiod on page 17 all belonged to the Alexandrine school of literature.

[2] Plato, *Laws*, I, 626, 633, 636. Also Aristotle, *Politics*, VII, 2, 9. "In Lacedæmon and Crete the system of education and the greater part of the laws are framed with a view to war." And VIII, 4, 1, "The Lacedæmonians . . . brutalize their children by laborious exercises which they think will make them courageous."

[3] **gown**: the Roman toga, hence the symbol of peace.

of their weapon,[1] to guard, and to strike safely with edge or point; this will keep them healthy, nimble, strong, and well in breath; is also the likeliest means to make them grow large and tall, and to inspire them with a gallant and fearless courage, which being tempered with seasonable lectures and precepts to them of true fortitude and patience, will turn into a native and heroic valor and make them hate the cowardice of doing wrong.[2] They must be also practiced in all the locks and gripes of wrestling[3] wherein Englishmen were wont to excel, as need may often be in fight to tug, to grapple, and to close. And this perhaps will be enough, wherein to prove and heat their single strength.

The interim of unsweating[4] themselves regularly, and convenient rest before meat, may, both with profit and delight, be taken up in recreating and composing their travailed spirits with the solemn and divine harmonies of music, heard or learned;[5] either whilst the skillful organist plies his grave and fancied descant[6]

[1] **use of their weapon**: fencing. See p. xxxvii.

[2] That is, the training of the body aids in forming moral standards. See Plato, *Laws*, VII, 791.

[3] **wrestling**: Milton would revive this almost forgotten sport. "The citizens of London, in times past, are said to have been expert in the art of wrestling, and annually upon St. James's day they were accustomed to make a public trial of their skill. . . . From the time that wrestling became unfashionable and was rarely practised by persons of opulence, it declined also among the populace, but by slower degrees; and at present is seldom seen except at wakes and fairs, where it still continues to be partially exhibited." — Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England*, 146.

[4] **unsweating**: cooling off after exercise.

[5] **learned**: probably he means that the student will find the actual practice upon some musical instrument a rest during this interim.

[6] **descant**: "An instrumental prelude, consisting of variations on a given theme." — *N. E. D.*

in lofty fugues,[1] or the whole symphony with artful and unimaginable touches adorn and grace the well-studied chords of some choice composer; sometimes the lute or soft organ-stop waiting on elegant voices, either to religious, martial, or civil ditties;[2] which, if wise men[3] and prophets be not extremely out, have a great power over dispositions and manners, to smooth and make them gentle from rustic harshness and distempered passions. The like also would not be inexpedient after meat, to assist and cherish nature in her first concoction,[4] and send their minds back to study in good tune and satisfaction. Where having followed it close under vigilant eyes, till about two hours before supper,[5] they are, by a sudden alarum or watchword, to be called out to their military motions, under sky or covert, according to the season, as was the Roman wont; first on foot, then, as their age permits, on horseback, to all the art of cavalry; that having in sport, but with much exactness and daily muster, served out the rudiments of their soldiership, in all the skill of embattling, marching, encamping, fortifying, besieging, and battering, with all the helps of ancient and modern stratagems, tactics, and warlike maxims, they may as it were out of a long war come forth renowned

[1] **fugues**: "a polyphonic composition, in which one or more themes introduced by one part are repeated and developed by others in succession." — L. E. L.

[2] **ditties**: songs.

[3] Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory*, bk. I, chap. 10, musters a long roll of wise men who have testified to the educational value of music. See *P. L.* XI, 563, and *Solemn Music*; also Plato's *Republic*, III, 399; Shakespeare: *Tempest*, I, ii, 391–93; *Measure for Measure*, IV, i, 14, 15; *Merchant of Venice*, V, i, 70–85; *Taming of the Shrew*, III, i, 10–12.

[4] **concoction**: digestion. See *P. L.* V, 437.

[5] **supper** was usually between seven and eight o'clock.

and perfect commanders in the service of their country.[1] They would not then,[2] if they were trusted with fair and hopeful armies, suffer them, for want of just and wise discipline, to shed away from about them like sick feathers, though they be never so oft supplied; they would not suffer their empty and unrecruitable[3] colonels of twenty men in a company, to quaff out or convey into secret hoards, the wages of a delusive list,[4] and a miserable remnant; yet in the meanwhile to be overmastered with a score or two of drunkards, the only soldiery left about them, or else to comply with all rapines and violences. No, certainly, if they knew aught of that knowledge that belongs to good men or good governors, they would not suffer these things.

But to turn to our own institute: besides these constant exercises at home, there is another opportunity of gaining experience to be won from pleasure itself abroad; in those vernal seasons[5] of the year when the air is calm and pleasant, it were an injury and sullenness against nature, not to go out and see her riches,

[1] Milton's college is then to include the training of a military academy.

[2] **They would not then**: "The constant diminution of his [Essex] army through 1643 from sickness and desertion was a constant subject of complaint, and there was information given to Parliament in the end of that year of companies with only twenty men in them near London amongst those serving under Essex." -- Quoted from S. R. Gardiner by O. B.

[3] **unrecruitable**: probably, not able to obtain recruits.

[4] **delusive list**: a list that existed only on paper; and the men actually in service were only a miserable remnant.

[5] This method of instruction is gradually coming into use in educational cruises, which generally extend over several months; and in botanical, zoölogical, or geological excursions of professors and students. These last are, however, chiefly undertaken, not in the spring, but in the long summer vacations.

and partake in her rejoicing with heaven and earth. I should not therefore be a persuader to them of studying much then, after two or three years that they have well laid their grounds, but to ride out in companies, with prudent and staid guides, to all the quarters of the land: learning and observing all places of strength, all commodities [1] of building and of soil, for towns and tillage, harbors and ports for trade. Sometimes taking sea as far as to our navy, to learn there also what they can in the practical knowledge of sailing and of sea-fight.

These ways would try all their peculiar gifts of nature; and if there were any secret excellence among them would fetch it out, and give it fair opportunities to advance itself by, which could not but mightily redound to the good of this nation, and bring into fashion again those old admired virtues and excellencies, with far more advantage now in this purity of Christian knowledge. Nor shall we then need the monsieurs of Paris to take our hopeful youth into their slight and prodigal [2] custodies, and send them over, back again, transformed into mimics, apes, and kickshaws.[3] But if they desire to see other countries at three or four and twenty years of age,[4] not to learn principles, but to enlarge experience, and make wise observation, they will by that time be such as shall deserve the regard and honor of all men where they pass, and the society and friendship of those in

[1] **commodities**: suitability, fitting utility.

[2] **slight and prodigal**: worthless or frivolous and wasteful lavish. See Shakespeare: *Julius Cæsar*, iv, i, 12; *Love's Labour's Lost*, v, ii, 463.

[3] **kickshaws**: fantastic or frivolous persons.

[4] Milton himself was almost thirty before he went abroad.

all places who are best and most eminent. And, perhaps, then other nations will be glad to visit us for their breeding, or else to imitate us in their own country.

Now, lastly, for their diet there cannot be much to say, save only that it would be best in the same house; for much time else would be lost abroad, and many ill habits got; and that it should be plain, healthful, and moderate,[1] I suppose is out of controversy. Thus, Mr. Hartlib, you have a general view in writing, as your desire was, of that which at several times I had discoursed with you concerning the best and noblest way of education; not beginning, as some have done, from the cradle, which yet might be worth many considerations, if brevity had not been my scope; many other circumstances also I could have mentioned, but this, to such as have the worth in them to make trial, for light and direction may be enough. Only I believe that this is not a bow for every man to shoot in,[2] that counts himself a teacher; but will require sinews almost equal to those which Homer gave Ulysses;[3] yet I am withal persuaded that it may prove much more easy in the assay,[4] than it now seems at distance, and much more

[1] Of Milton's own practice, see p. lxix.

[2] **in**: with.

[3] **Ulysses**: Penelope says to the wooers, "I will set forth for you the great bow of divine Odysseus, and whoso shall most easily string the bow in his hands, and shoot through all the twelve axes, with him will I go and forsake this house." The wooers try one by one to draw the bow, but each in turn fails, then the disguised Odysseus "caught up a swift arrow which lay by his table . . . and laid it on the bridge of the bow, and held the notch and drew the string, even from the settle whereon he sat, and with straight aim shot the shaft and missed not one of the axes." — *Odyssey*, bk. XXI.

[4] **assay**: attempt, experiment.

illustrious; howbeit, not more difficult than I imagine, and that imagination presents me with nothing but very happy, and very possible according to best wishes; if God have so decreed, and this age have spirit and capacity enough to apprehend.

AREOPAGITICA[1]

A SPEECH FOR THE LIBERTY OF UNLICENSED PRINTING, TO THE PARLIAMENT OF ENGLAND

> This is true liberty, when free-born men,
> Having to advise the public, may speak free,
> Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise;
> Who neither can nor will, may hold his peace;
> What can be juster in a State than this?
>
> EURIPIDES, *The Suppliants.*

THEY who to states[2] and governors of the Commonwealth direct their speech, High Court of Parliament, or, wanting[3] such access in a private condition, write

[1] Published November 24, 1644.

Milton chose this title because of the classic precedent in the speech of Isocrates to the Areopagus at Athens, 355 B.C. Isocrates, the celebrated orator and rhetorician, was by nature too timid and had too weak a body to endure the strain of speaking in public; therefore, he composed his orations to be read, some of them as if addressed directly to an audience. They were, then, what this of Milton's is, *reading speeches*. Isocrates, like Milton, was a lover of liberty, and in his λόγος Αρεοπαγῖτικός, (Areopagitic Discourse) he sought to influence public opinion by an appeal to high ideals of conduct. The Areopagus, which he addressed, was the high court of Athens; it had the jurisdiction in certain cases of murder, and the direction of religion. It had previously had the supervision of the law courts, the control of the education of the young, and the censorship of public morals. It had once been composed of men of age, integrity, and experience, who had been patterns of right conduct in themselves as well as judges of evil action in others. But weaker and baser men had gained place, and the great moral influence of the

[2] **states**: heads of states. Cf. *P. L.* II, 387; *Ps.* LXXXII, 2.

[3] **wanting**: desiring, but being without such access because of their private position.

that which they foresee may advance the public good;[1] I suppose them, as at the beginning of no mean endeavor, not a little altered[2] and moved inwardly in their minds: some with doubt of what will be the success,[3] others with fear of what will be the censure;[4] some with hope, others with confidence of[5] what they have to speak. And me perhaps each of these disposi-

Areopagus was gone. Isocrates urged the city to restore to it this lost control, especially in education and morals. He decried the excesses of the wealthy and the poverty of the poor, the lack of modesty and sobriety in the young, and the general indifference to public welfare; this state of things he compared to the uprightness of the time of Solon and Kleithenes, and he implored his city to return to the simplicity and patriotism of the former age. In like manner and with as noble an intent, Milton addressed the High Court of Parliament. There is, then, a similarity in general structure and purpose. And there is also some likeness in style, for Jebb says of Isocrates (*Attic Orators*, II, 54), "He was the first Greek who gave a really artistic finish to literary rhetorical prose." The distinctive feature in the composition of Isocrates is his use of the periodic sentence. It has (*Ibid.* p. 62) "a certain luxuriant amplitude . . . it rejoices in rich diffusiveness — it unrolls itself like a clear river, luring the hearer on from bend to bend through the soft beauties of its winding course." For an abstract of the speech see *Ibid.* II, 206 ff. See Plato's estimate of Isocrates in the *Phædrus,* 279 A; also Milton's *Sonnet*, X, 8.

[1] Grammatically this phrase is incomplete. The Greek rhetoricians called the figure *anacoluthia*, a want of sequence, and justified its use in impassioned discourse. Is it justified here; is the sense clear? See *Romeo and Juliet*, IV, iii, 35–50.

[2] **altered**: disturbed. "Then began the bitter Fate of Jove to alter us unhappie." — Chapman's tr. of the *Odyssey*, IX, 96.

[3] **success**: the termination of an enterprise, issue, result. — *P. L.* II, 9; "ill successes": *P. L.* IV, 932; "bad success": *P. R.* IV, 1.

[4] **censure**: judgment, opinion. "Your name is great in mouths of wisest censure": — *Othello*, II, iii, 193; "How blest am I in my just censure, in my true opinion!" — *Winter's Tale*, II, i, 37.

[5] **of**: based upon.

tions, as the subject was whereon I entered,[1] may have at other times variously affected; and likely might in these foremost expressions now also disclose which of them swayed most, but that the very attempt of this address thus made, and the thought of whom it hath recourse to, hath got the power within me to a passion,[2] far more welcome than incidental to a preface.

Which [3] though I stay not [4] to confess, ere any ask, I shall be blameless, if it be no other than the joy and gratulation which it brings to all who wish and promote their country's liberty; whereof this whole discourse proposed will be a certain testimony, if not a trophy.[5] For this is not the liberty which we can hope, that no grievance ever should arise in the Commonwealth — that let no man in this world expect; but when complaints are freely heard, deeply considered, and speedily reformed,[6] then is the utmost bound of civil liberty attained, that wise men look for. To which, if I now manifest by the very sound of this which I shall utter, that we are already in good part arrived,[7]

[1] Milton had published in prose before this date five pamphlets on church reform; he had also written *Education* and two of his Divorce Pamphlets. For the titles and dates of all these see p. lxxxiii.

[2] **passion**: intense emotion or enthusiasm. Cf. *P. L.* IX, 667.

[3] What is the construction of **which**, and to what does it refer? Also **it** in the next line?

[4] **stay not**: hasten.

[5] **trophy**: if not a memorial of victory for the freedom of the press, this discourse will be at least a testimony of my attitude toward liberty of speech.

[6] Observe the three points, especially the skill with which the adverbs are chosen.

[7] **arrived**: "Milton had not yet perhaps fully discovered the disheartening fact that the Presbyterian party when in power was to show itself as little capable of an enlightened tolerance as the Episcopalians whom they had overthrown." — Hales.

and yet from such a steep[1] disadvantage of tyranny and superstition grounded into our principles as was beyond the manhood of a Roman recovery;[2] it will be attributed first, as is most due, to the strong assistance of God our deliverer, next to your faithful guidance and undaunted wisdom, Lords and Commons of England.[3]

Neither is it, in God's esteem, the diminution of his glory, when honorable things are spoken of good men and worthy magistrates; which if I now first should begin to do,[4] after so fair a progress of your laudable deeds, and such a long obligement[5] upon the whole realm to[6] your indefatigable virtues, I might be justly reckoned among the tardiest and the unwillingest of them that praise ye.

Nevertheless, there being three principal things,

[1] **steep**: see the use of this adjective in *P. L.* VI, 324; *Ps.* VII, 60.

[2] **a Roman recovery**: the debased condition of England under the Stuarts was equal to that of Rome under the Emperors; we in England have had manhood enough to recover from this condition, which they in Rome showed themselves incapable of doing.

[3] Mark, and at the end of the essay, read together all the passages expressing Milton's respect for, and confidence in, the Parliament. Compare these with similar passages in the *Free Commonwealth.*

[4] In his Church Reform pamphlets he had frequently before this spoken **honorable things** of the Parliament. See especially *P. W.* III, 144–150, the climax of which begins: "And, indeed, if we consider the general concourse of suppliants, the free and ready admittance, the willing speedy redress in what is possible, it will not seem much otherwise, than as if some divine commission from heaven were descended to take into hearing and consideration the long and remediless afflictions of this kingdom."

[5] **obligement**: moral obligation.

[6] **to**: for.

without which all praising is but courtship [1] and flattery: first, when that only is praised which is solidly worth praise; next, when greatest likelihoods are brought that such things are truly and really in those persons to whom they are ascribed; the other,[2] when he who praises, by showing that such his actual persuasion is of whom he writes, can demonstrate that he flatters not; the former two of these I have heretofore endeavored, rescuing the employment from him [3] who went about to [4] impair your merits with a trivial and

[1] **courtship**: the practice of the arts of a courtier.

[2] **the other** : the third.

[3] **him**: Joseph Hall (1574–1656), Bishop of Exeter and later of Norwich, is best known as the writer of *Contemplations upon the New Testament*, of *Christian Meditations*, and of *Satires*. He was in favor with James, whom he accompanied into Scotland, and who appointed him chaplain to Prince Henry. Although a loyal churchman, he was suspected by Laud of Calvinistic leanings, and three times had to appear on his knees before the king to plead not guilty of these charges. He justified himself, and was requested by Laud to write, in 1640, *Episcopacy by Divine Right Asserted.* This was especially an answer to Scotland, which had gone over entirely to Calvinism. In 1641 when "Limited Episcopacy" and "Root and Branch Reform" were the subjects of hot debate in the Parliament, Hall wrote his *Humble Remonstrance to the High Court of Parliament.* This was the pamphlet that started the famous controversy with Smectymnuus, the name being formed from the initials of the five Puritan divines who composed the answer to this pamphlet of Hall's. Milton wrote two of the replies to the various tracts that passed between Hall and his opponents (see p. lxxxiii). In *A Short Answer to the Tedious Vindication of Smectymnuus*, Hall had attacked Milton personally with open scurrility. See Masson, II, 390 ff. Milton thought Hall's praise of Parliament was **trivial** because it was commonplace, and **malignant**, that is disloyal, because it assumed that the Parliament was inseparable from the Crown.

[4] **went about to**: frequently in Shakespeare; "if he go about to expound this dream." — *Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV, i, 212.

malignant encomium; the latter,[1] as belonging chiefly to mine own acquittal, that whom I so extolled I did not flatter, hath been reserved opportunely to this occasion. For he who freely magnifies what hath been nobly done, and fears not to declare as freely what might be done better, gives ye[2] the best covenant of his fidelity; and that his loyalest affection and his hope waits[3] on your proceedings. His highest praising is not flattery, and his plainest advice is a kind of praising; for though I should affirm and hold by argument, that it would fare better with truth, with learning, and the Commonwealth, if one of your published orders, which I should name, were called in; yet at the same time it could not but much redound to the lustre of your mild and equal government, whenas private persons are hereby animated to think ye better pleased with public advice, than other statists[4] have been delighted heretofore with public flattery. And men will then see what difference there is between the magnanimity of a triennial[5] Parliament, and that jealous

[1] **the latter**: the third point.

[2] **ye**: in old English *ye* (gē) was nominative only, *you* (ēow) was accusative and dative. "This distinction, however, though observed in our version of the Bible, was disregarded by Elizabethan authors, and *ye* seems to be generally used in questions, entreaties, and rhetorical appeals." — Abbott, *Shakespearian Grammar*, 159. What is Milton's use throughout these essays? Compare his use in *P. L.* I, 318; VI, 564–65; *Comus*, 814–15.

[3] **waits**: What is the subject of this verb? Compare *Lyc.* 6, 7; *P. L.* VIII, 222–23; *P. R.* IV, 386–87.

[4] **statists**: statesmen. See *P. R.* IV. 354, and *Cymbeline*, II, iv, 16; *Hamlet*, V, ii, 33.

[5] An act was passed Feb. 15, 1641, to provide that Parliament should meet at least once in three years. Charles I had ruled from 1629 to 1640 without any meeting of Parliament, and this law was enacted to provide against the possibility of any other such long intermission of Parliament.

haughtiness of prelates and Cabin Counsellors [1] that usurped of late, whenas they shall observe ye in the midst of your victories and successes [2] more gently brooking [3] written exceptions against a voted order than other courts, which had produced nothing worth memory but the weak ostentation of wealth, would have endured the least signified dislike at any sudden proclamation.

If I should thus far presume upon the meek demeanor of your civil [4] and gentle greatness, Lords and Commons, as what your published order hath directly said, that to gainsay, I might defend myself with ease, if any should accuse me of being new or insolent,[5] did they but know how much better I find ye esteem it to imitate the old and elegant humanity of Greece,[6] than the barbaric pride of a Hunnish and Norwegian stateliness. And out of those ages, to whose polite [7]

[1] He refers to the Court of Star Chamber, to the Court of High Commission, and especially to the Cabinet Council. "Business of weight was settled with a select number of favorites in the King's private apartment, — the Cabinet Council, as it was beginning to be called." — Gardiner, *History of England*, x, 292. These were the bodies through which Charles secured a revenue and maintained his power over the people. Elsewhere Milton says "to vindicate and restore the rights of parliament invaded by cabin councils," and "the politic cabinet at Whitehall." — *P. W.* I, 404 and 347.

[2] What victories and successes had Parliament won before this date?

[3] **brooking**: See *P. L.* VI, 274; IX, 676; *S. A.* 1344.

[4] **civil** : refined, polite. "War seemed a civil game to this uproar": *P. L.* VI, 667; "civility of manners" : *P. R.* IV, 83.

[5] Of doing anything **new** or presumptuous (or unusual).

[6] Milton's devotion to Greek literature and his admiration of Greek culture are known to every reader of his poems. What does **humanity** mean in this passage?

[7] **polite**: polished, refined. We still say *polite* literature.

wisdom and letters we owe that we are not yet[1] Goths and Jutlanders, I could name him[2] who from his private house wrote that discourse to the Parliament of Athens, that persuades[3] them to change the form of democraty which was then established. Such honor was done in those days to men[4] who professed the study of wisdom and eloquence, not only in their own country, but in other lands, that cities and seignories[5] heard them gladly, and with great respect, if they had aught in public to admonish the state. Thus did Dion[6] Prusæus, a stranger and a private orator, counsel the Rhodians against a former edict; and I abound with other like examples, which to set here would be superfluous. But if from the industry of a life wholly dedicated to studious labors,[7] and those natural endow-

[1] **yet**: still, the same use in *P. L.* I, 153; IV, 534.

[2] Isocrates. See pp. 31, 32.

[3] **persuades**: seeks to persuade.

[4] The orators and rhetoricians; possibly referring to the Sophists, who were teachers of general culture, and proposed especially to fit the student for civic life. But Plutarch says (*Life of Themistocles*): "a professor of what was then called wisdom, which consisted in a knowledge of the arts of government, and the practical part of political prudence. This was a sect formed upon the principles of Solon, and descending in succession from him; but when the science of government came to be mixed with forensic arts, and passed from action to mere words, its professors, instead of sages, were called sophists."

[5] **cities**: self-governing cities (L. *civitas*), or states with their dependencies. (See *N. E. D.*) **seignories**: principalities, provinces.

[6] **Dion**, called Chrysostomus (the golden-mouthed) because of his eloquence as an orator, was born at Prusa in Bithynia about 50 B.C. There are remaining eighty of his orations or political discourses; the one referred to, is that in which he sought to persuade the Rhodians to desist from the custom of changing their old statues, i.e., of erasing the old names and of inscribing instead the names of those men then in power.

[7] **studious labors**: "It is my way to suffer no impediment, no

ments haply not the worst for two and fifty degrees of northern latitude,[1] so much must be derogated,[2] as to count me not equal to any of those who had this privilege, I would obtain to[3] be thought not so inferior, as yourselves are superior to the most of them who received their counsel: and how far you excel them, be assured, Lords and Commons, there can no greater testimony appear, than when your prudent spirit acknowledges and obeys the voice of reason from what quarter soever it be heard speaking; and renders ye as willing to repeal any act of your own setting forth, as any set forth by your predecessors.[4]

If ye be thus resolved, as it were injury to think ye were not, I know not what should withhold me from presenting ye with a fit instance wherein to show both that love of truth which ye eminently profess, and that uprightness of your judgment which is not wont to be partial to yourselves; by judging over again that Order[5] which ye have ordained "to regulate Printing:

love of ease, no avocation whatever, to chill the ardour, to break the continuity, or divert the completion of my literary pursuits." — *P. W.* III, 492.

[1] Milton frequently expresses his opinion that a cold climate is not conducive to literary production. In the poem to Mansus he speaks of his Muse as, "nourished scantily in the icy north"; again in *P. W.* v, 240, "the sun, which we want, ripens wits as well as fruit." See *P. L.* IX, 41 ff.

[2] **derogated**: taken away.

[3] See instances of this construction in the *N. E. D.*

[4] This closes what Aristotle calls the *Exordium*; the next paragraph begins the *Exposition*, the statement of what he intends to prove. "It appears then that the only indispensable parts *of a speech* are the statement of the case and the proof. These are the only proper *or characteristic* parts: but if more are added, they must not exceed four, viz., exordium, exposition, proof and peroration." — Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, bk. III, chap. 13.

[5] See the *Introduction*.

that no book, pamphlet, or paper shall be henceforth printed, unless the same be first approved and licensed by such," or at least one of such as shall be thereto appointed. For that part which preserves justly every man's copy [1] to himself, or provides for the poor, I touch not, only wish they be not made pretences to abuse and persecute honest and painful [2] men, who offend not in either of these particulars. But that other clause [3] of Licensing Books, which we thought had died with his [4] brother quadragesimal [5] and matrimonial [6] when the prelates expired,[7] I shall now attend [8] with such a homily,[9] as shall lay before ye, first the

[1] **copy**: copyright.

[2] **painful**: painstaking.

[3] See p. xvi, beginning, "It is therefore ordered."

[4] **his**: the word *its* was just coming into good use. It occurs in Milton's poetry three times. How often is it found in Shakespeare and the Bible? How was it originally written?

[5] **quadragesimal**: Lenten. Milton here refers to the regulation regarding the eating of food during Lent. Certain days were appointed for "fish-days," for the non-observance of which "licenses" were granted. "Queen Elizabeth used to say that She would never eat Flesh in Lent, without obtaining a License from her little black Husband — Archbishop Whitgift." Walton's *Life of Hooker*. See also *II Henry IV*, II, iv, 370–76. Quoted by Hales.

[6] **matrimonial**: pertaining to licenses for marriage. Milton considered marriage as wholly a civil contract with which the church should have no concernment. "As for marriage, that ministers should meddle with them, as not sanctified or legitimate without their celebration, I find no ground in scripture either of precept or example." — *P. W.* III, 21. "They dare not affirm that marriage is either a sacrament or a mystery." — *Ibid.* 212.

[7] **expired**: the bill for the Exclusion of Bishops from Parliament finally passed Feb. 5, 1642; Episcopacy was not legally abolished until 1646, but this bill deprived the prelates of their power.

[8] **attend**: present myself.

[9] **homily**: discourse. "What tedious homily of love have you wearied your parishioners withal." — *As You Like It*, III, ii, 164.

inventors of it, to be those whom ye will be loth to own; next what is to be thought in general of reading, whatever sort the books be; and that this Order avails nothing to the suppressing of scandalous, seditious, and libellous books, which were mainly intended to be suppressed. Last,[1] that it will be primely to the discouragement of all learning, and the stop[2] of truth, not only by the disexercising[3] and blunting our abilities in what we know already, but by hindering and cropping the discovery that might be yet further made both in religious and civil wisdom.

I deny not[4] but that[5] it is of greatest concernment in the Church and Commonwealth, to have a vigilant eye how books demean themselves as well as men; and thereafter to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors. For books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain[6] a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny

[1] Note the clear statement of the four points to be proved.

[2] **stop**: see *Comus*, 552.

[3] **disexercising**: the *N. E. D.* gives no other occurrence of this word. See in *L.* the long list of words beginning with *dis.*, showing Milton's fondness for the compound. Compare Shakespeare's practice.

[4] Here begins the proof of proposition I.

[5] **but that**: (L. *non dubito quin.*) What is the present use?

[6] **but do contain**: Cf. Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, p. 72, ed. Aldis Wright: "It is not possible to have the true pictures or statues of Cyrus, Alexander, Cæsar, no nor of the kings or great personages of much later years; for the originals cannot last, and the copies cannot but leese of the life and truth. But the images of men's wits and knowledges remain in books, exempted from the wrong of time and capable of perpetual renovation. Neither are they fitly to be called images, because they generate still, and cast their seeds in the minds of others, provoking and causing infinite actions and opinions in succeeding ages." — Quoted by Hales.



they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth;[1] and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye.[2] Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood[3] of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. 'T is true, no age can restore a life, whereof perhaps there is no great loss; and revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse.[4] We should be wary, therefore, what persecution we raise against the living labors of public men, how we spill[5] that seasoned life of man, preserved and stored up in books; since we see a kind of homicide may be thus committed, sometimes a martyrdom; and if it extend

[1] **dragon's teeth**: the story of the sowing of the dragon's teeth is told of both Cadmus and Jason. How does the story of Deucalion differ? See Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VII, 121. What modern poet retells this story?

[2] **in the eye**: possibly in the eye of the world, before the whole world; or perhaps, in the seat of intelligence, in the reason. See p. 44, n. 2.

[3] **life-blood**: "all the most sacred and life-blood laws" — *P. W.* II, 404; "The very life-blood of our enterprise." — *I Henry IV*, IV, i, 29.

[4] What is in history the best illustration of this?

[5] **spill**: destroy. See *Lear*, III, ii, 8; and "So full of artless jealousy is guilt, It spills itself in fearing to be spilt." — *Hamlet*, IV, v, 20.

to the whole impression, a kind of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying of an elemental life,[1] but strikes at that ethereal and fifth essence,[2] the breath of reason itself, slays an immortality rather than a life. But lest I should be condemned of introducing licence, while I oppose licensing, I refuse not the pains to be so much historical, as will serve to show what hath been done by ancient and famous commonwealths against this disorder, till the very time that this project of licensing crept out of the Inquisition,[3]

[1] **elemental life**: see Milton's theory of life in *P. L.* v, 472–89. The contrast is here between that life springing from the *four* elements and that from the *fifth*.

[2] **fifth essence**: "The cumbrous elements — Earth, Flood, Air, Fire; And this ethereal quintessence of Heaven Flew upward . . . and turned to stars" — *P. L.* III, 715–18; "Light Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure" — *P. L.* VII, 243-44. Both passages refer to Aristotle's theory of a fifth element, ether (extending from the heaven of the fixed stars to the moon), which was finer and subtler, and had a different motion from the four elements known to the senses.

[3] **Inquisition**: the idea that the church has the right and power to inquire into and stamp out all disbelief goes far back into its history; from Constantine down there are records of edicts and visitations, of correction and confiscation. Through the early centuries the idea developed steadily under Papal encouragement. At the Council of Tours in 1163 the word, with something of its modern sense, was first used; in this same century and the beginning of the next, the claim of the church to uproot heresy was the ground upon which the Waldensians and Albigensians were so cruelly dealt with. But the real organization of these efforts was slight until the Council of Toulouse in 1229 gave definite sanction and system to the inquisitions of bishops; and until Dominic proposed, and Innocent III approved, the order called *The Familiars of the Holy Office*, a body of laymen who acted as spies and informers. From Toulouse, the Order spread into France and Italy. In Spain, where it was introduced by Gregory IX in 1232, it was at first ineffective, but finally attained its fullest power. Encouraged by Ferdinand

was caught up by our prelates, and hath caught some of our presbyters.[1]

In Athens,[2] where books and wits were ever busier than in any other part of Greece, I find but only two sorts of writings which the magistrate cared to take notice of; those either blasphemous and atheistical, or libellous. Thus the books of Protagoras[3] were by the judges of Areopagus commanded to be burnt, and himself banished the territory for a discourse begun with his confessing not to know "whether there were gods, or whether not." And against defaming, it was

and Isabella, in 1480, a tribunal was established at Seville, and began its bloody work by burning 298 the first year. Torquemada, the prior of the Dominican convent of Segovia, made the first Grand Inquisitor, opened a regular court at Seville in 1481. One of the sources of the power of the Inquisition was its control of printing. Häusser says (*The Period of the Reformation*, chap. XX): "An Index in my possession shows how systematically the heretical literature of that day was attacked. The literary productions of fifteen years are comprised within five sheets, and everything of importance that had appeared in theology, philosophy, history, antiquarian researches, and natural history, is condemned. Thus almost all literature was forbidden, with the exception of that which had arisen in the Roman Catholic Church or among her orders . . . a large portion of Europe was as good as closed against all literary progress."

[1] That is, the Presbyterians now in power.

[2] **Athens**:

> "Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts
> And eloquence, native to famous wits
> Or hospital, in her sweet recess,
> City or suburban, studious walks and shades."
>
> *P. R.* IV, 240; also the same thought in *P. W.* I, 278.

[3] **Protagoras** of Abdera (about 490 B.C.), in Thrace, was one of the first Sophists and a teacher of rhetoric. He was accused, in 411, by Puthodorus of atheism, because in his treatise *Concerning the Gods*, he said that the subject was too obscure and life too short for man to know; the result is here given. See Plato's *Protagoras*.

agreed that none should be traduced by name, as was the manner of Vetus Comœdia,[1] whereby we may guess how they censured libelling; and this course was quick[2] enough, as Cicero writes,[3] to quell[4] both the desperate wits of other atheists, and the open way of defaming, as the event[5] showed. Of other sects and opinions, though tending to voluptuousness, and the denying of divine Providence, they took no heed. Therefore we do not read that either Epicurus,[6] or that libertine school of Cyrene,[7] or what the Cynic impudence[8] uttered, was ever questioned by the laws.

[1] **Vetus Comœdia**: the Old Attic Comedy, which originated with Cratinus, and was carried to its height by Aristophanes. "We are told that at first the comedians were distinctly licensed by the law to make personal attacks." — Mahaffy, *Greek Literature*, I, part II, 200.

[2] **quick** : alive, powerful. "Both quick and dead," *P. L.* XII, 460 ; "For the word of God is quick and powerful," Heb. IV, 12.

[3] **Cicero**, in the *De Natura Deorum* I, 23, tells the story of Protagoras and then adds : "This punishment, I think, hindered many from professing their disbelief in the gods ; since even the doubt was punished."

[4] **quell** : put to an end, suppress. See *P. L.* V, 740 ; *Comus*, 613.

[5] **event** : result, outcome.

[6] **Epicurus** (341–270 B.C.) was the founder of the Epicurean school of philosophy at Athens, which held that happiness, that is *pleasure*, is the highest good of life. Epicurus taught that a man to be happy must be virtuous, yet among his followers there were many who had no scruples about the means they used in attaining this desired end.

[7] Aristippus (435 ?–399 ? B.C.) founded, about 370, a school of philosophy at Cyrene, which made pleasure the end of life. To enjoy the present was the aim of existence.

[8] Antisthenes (b. 444 B.C.), a friend and pupil of Socrates, taught at Athens in the gymnasium called *Cynosarges*, whence possibly the name of the *Cynic* school arose. The Cynics held that virtue is the only good, but in seeking it they despised culture and organized society; man must return to a natural state.

Neither is it recorded that the writings of those old comedians were suppressed, though the acting of them were forbid; and that Plato commended the reading of Aristophanes, the loosest[1] of them all, to his royal scholar Dionysius,[2] is commonly known, and may be excused, if holy Chrysostom,[3] as is reported, nightly studied so much the same author, and had the art to cleanse a scurrilous vehemence into the style of a rousing sermon.

That other leading city of Greece, Lacedæmon, considering that Lycurgus[4] their lawgiver was so addicted to elegant learning, as to have been the first that brought out of Ionia the scattered works of Homer,[5]

Antisthenes is less well known than his famous pupil, Diogenes of Sinope. "Milton means by 'the Cynic impudence,' that insolence of manner and of language, that rude and unqualified contempt of humanity, that especially characterized the philosopher of the tub." — Hales.

[1] **loosest**: most plain spoken in his ridicule of weakness and folly in others. See his plays in Frere's translation, *Everyman's Library*.

[2] **Dionysius** the Elder (about 430–367 B.C.), Tyrant of Syracuse, who invited Plato to his court.

[3] John (347–407 A.D.), the Saint of the Greek Church, called **Chrysostom** (golden-mouthed) because of his eloquence, was Archbishop of Antioch from 397 to 405. He was driven into exile because of his preaching against the iniquity of the court and the church.

[4] **Lycurgus** : see p. 19, n. 4.

[5] Plutarch says (*Life of Lycurgus*) : "There [in Ionia] also, probably, he met with Homer's poems, which were preserved by the posterity of Cleophylus. Observing that many moral sentences, and much political knowledge were intermixed with his stories, which had an irresistible charm, he collected them into one body, and transcribed them with pleasure, in order to take them home with him. For his glorious poetry was not yet fully known in Greece; only some particular pieces were in a few hands, as they happened to be dispersed. Lycurgus was the first that made them generally known."

and sent the poet Thales[1] from Crete to prepare and mollify the Spartan surliness with his smooth songs and odes, the better to plant among them law and civility, it is to be wondered how museless and unbookish they were, minding nought but the feats of war.[2] There needed no licensing of books among them, for they disliked all but their own laconic apothegms,[3] and took a slight occasion to chase Archilochus[4] out of their city, perhaps for composing in a higher strain than their own soldierly ballads and roundels could reach to; or if it were for his broad verses, they were not therein so cautious, but they were as dissolute in

[1] **Thales**, a native of Crete, was the celebrated musician and lyric poet who founded the second of the musical schools of Sparta. "Among the friends he [Lycurgus] gained in Crete, was Thales, with whom he had interest enough to persuade him to go and settle at Sparta. Thales was famed for his wisdom and political abilities. . . . For his odes were so many persuasives to obedience and unanimity, as by means of melody and numbers they had great grace and power, they softened insensibly the manners of the audience, drew them oft from the animosities which then prevailed, and united them in zeal for excellence and virtue." — Plutarch, *ibid.*

[2] "As for learning, they had just what was absolutely necessary. All the rest of their education was calculated to make them subject to command, to endure labor, to fight and conquer." — Plutarch, *ibid.* See also p. 24, n. 2.

[3] "The Athenian citizen is reputed among all the Hellenes to be a great talker, whereas the Spartan is renowned for brevity, and the Cretan is held to be a sagacious, reserved sort of person." — Plato, *Laws*, I, 641.

[4] **Archilochus** (about 714–676 B.C.) was one of the earliest lyric poets of Ionia. There are differing accounts of the reason for his expulsion from Sparta; that he had said it was better for a man to throw away arms than to lose his life; that his verses were licentious; and that in them he had attacked in an indecent manner the daughters of Lycambes. See Smith, *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography*, for a discussion of the subject.

their promiscuous conversing;[1] whence Euripides affirms, in *Andromache*,[2] that their women were all unchaste. Thus much may give us light after[3] what sort of books were prohibited among the Greeks.

The Romans also, for many ages trained up only to a military roughness, resembling[4] most of the Lacedæmonian guise, knew of learning little but what their Twelve Tables,[5] and the Pontific College[6] with their augurs[7] and flamens taught them in religion and law; so unacquainted with other learning, that when Car-

[1] **conversing**: associating familiarly. See *P. L.* VII, 9.

[2] Plutarch says that in the days of Lycurgus the women were commanded to exercise themselves in running and wrestling just as the men, in order to make their bodies strong. "As for the virgins appearing naked, there was nothing disgraceful in it, because everything was conducted with modesty, and without one indecent word or action." But Euripides shows the effects of this practice (*Andromache*, 590 ff., tr. by Coleridge). "No! a Spartan maid could not be chaste, e'en if she would, who leaves her home and bares her limbs and lets her robe float free, to share with youths their races and their sports." Aristotle, *Politics*, II, 9, 5–13, says these women were living "in every sort of intemperance and luxury."

[3] **after**: as to, regarding.

[4] **resembling of**: bearing the semblance of.

[5] **Twelve Tables**: see p. 19, n. 5.

[6] The **Pontific College** was the principal college of priests in Rome. Numa is said to have appointed five pontifices, — their original office is uncertain, as well as the meaning of the word, — the chief of whom was the Pontifex Maximus, the highest authority in religion. The number was increased later to fifteen. Under the direction of these were the **flamens**, priests devoted to the service of some particular deity (see *N. O.* 194). This college decided in matters of religion, had charge of the calendar, and interpreted certain laws, especially those relating to marriage.

[7] **augurs**: this college of priests, from two to sixteen in number, foretold future events, particularly interpreting, according to the books, the signs of approval or disapproval sent by Jove on the occasion of any public event.

neades[1] and Critolaus,[2] with the Stoic Diogenes[3] coming ambassadors to Rome, took thereby occasion to give the city a taste of their philosophy, they were suspected for seducers by no less a man than Cato the Censor,[4] who moved it[5] in the Senate to dismiss them speedily, and to banish all such Attic babblers out of Italy. But Scipio[6] and others of the noblest senators withstood him and his old Sabine austerity; honored and admired the men; and the censor himself at last, in his old age, fell to the study of that whereof before he was so scrupulous. And yet at the same time, Nævius[7] and Plautus,[8] the first Latin comedians, had

[1] **Carneades** of Cyrene (about 214–129 B.C.), the founder of the third Academic school, was sent, with the others here mentioned, in 155, to Rome to protest against the fine of 500 talents which had been imposed on the Athenians for the destruction of Oropus. Here he delivered two orations on Justice; in the first he defended justice, but in the second overthrew all the arguments he had established in the first.

[2] **Critolaus** belonged to the Peripatetic school of philosophy.

[3] **Diogenes**, called the Babylonian from his home in Seleucia, succeeded Zeno as head of the Stoic school at Athens.

[4] **Cato** Major (234?–149 B.C.), the famous general, was censor of Rome in 184. He was always an upholder of the old Roman simplicity of living, which he began to practice on his Sabine farm, and which he continued throughout his life. He despised Greek until his old age, when he is said to have learned the language. Hales cites Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, I, 2, 9. See Plutarch's account of this incident in his *Life of Cato.*

[5] **moved it.** See *L'A*, 33.

[6] **Scipio**, the Younger (about 185–129 B.C.), the famous general and conqueror of Carthage, was the adopted son of Scipio Africanus. He was an advocate of the stern and simple virtues practiced by Cato; but likewise a friend of the Greek historian Polybius, and a great lover of Greek culture and Greek learning.

[7] **Nævius** (about 270–199 B.C.) wrote plays in which he satirized the great families, especially that of the Metelli. Only fragments of his work remain to testify of his power as a writer.

[8] **Plautus**: the well-known writer of comedy.

filled the city with all the borrowed scenes of Menander[1] and Philemon.[2]

Then began to be considered there also what was to be done to libellous books[3] and authors; for Nævius was quickly cast into prison for his unbridled pen, and released by the tribunes upon his recantation; we read also that libels were burnt,[4] and the makers punished by Augustus. The like severity, no doubt, was used, if aught were impiously written against their esteemed gods. Except in these two points,[5] how the world went in books, the magistrate kept no reckoning. And therefore Lucretius[6] without impeachment versifies

[1] **Menander** (342–291 B.C.) was the greatest poet of the New Comedy. He wrote more than a hundred plays which were distinguished by sobriety and elegance, and of which only a few lines remain. Terence was the imitator of Menander, while Plautus was more indebted to Philemon.

[2] **Philemon** (about 360–262 B.C.) was the founder of the New Comedy. He presented plays eight years before Menander, over whom he often won the victory, because he was a greater favorite with the people, owing to the coarser, broader quality of his humor.

[3] There had before existed in one of the Twelve Tables a law against libel. "So a law was passed, and punishment imposed, to forbid that anyone should be described by malicious verses." Horace, *Epistle*, II, 1, 152–54.

[4] "**Augustus** was the first who used to take cognizance of libels under pretense of this law (that of treason), incensed by the insolence of Cassius Severus. . . . He also was exasperated by the publication of satirical verses written by unknown authors, exposing his cruelty, his pride, and dissensions with his mother." Tacitus' *Annals*, I, 72.

[5] That is, in the case of libel and blasphemous writings.

[6] **Lucretius**; see p. 17. "His poem is a splendid exposition of the doctrines of Epicurus, to whom the poet looked up as to a great deliverer from superstitions. . . . The authority for the statement that Cicero 'set forth' (=edited) Lucretius' poem is the phrase 'Tulli lima dignissimis,' applied to his verses by Saint Jerome. . . . For Milton's *second time* there is no explicit author-

his Epicurism to Memmius, and had the honor to be set forth the second time by Cicero, so great a father of the commonwealth; although himself disputes [1] against that opinion in his own writings. Nor was the satirical sharpness or naked plainness of Lucilius,[2] or Catullus,[3] or Flaccus,[4] by any order prohibited.

And for matters of state, the story [5] of Titus Livius,[6] though it extolled [7] that part which Pompey held, was not therefore suppressed by Octavius Cæsar [8] of the other faction. But that Naso [9] was by him ban-

ity. Jerome would seem to mean that Cicero *first* edited the poem. . . . That he edited it at all cannot be pronounced a fact." (Hales.) Lucretius dedicated his poem to Memmius.

[1] In the first two books of *De Natura Deorum* Cicero argues against Epicurus.

[2] **Lucilius** (180?–103 B.C.) is commonly said to be the first to use that form of satire which Horace and Juvenal perfected. Lucilius "criticized the life of his contemporaries in its various sides — political, moral, and literary — to a degree never attempted either by a comic poet before or a satirist afterwards." — T. and S. I. 208. See Horace, *Satires*, I, 10; II, 1.

[3] **Catullus** (87–54 B.C.) whose beautiful poetry is often coarse and sensual.

[4] **Flaccus**, the poet Horace, whose name was Quintus Horatius Flaccus.

[5] **story**: history. See *P. R.* II, 307; IV, 334.

[6] **Titus Livius** (59 B.C.–17 A.D.), the great historian of Rome.

[7] **though it extolled**: "Time has done what Augustus did not — it has 'suppressed' the passage here referred to. Books CIX–CXVI which dealt with the Cæsar and Pompey war, are only known to us by extremely meagre epitomes, or rather 'arguments.' Milton's authority for the tolerance shown by Augustus is Tacitus; see *Annales*, IV, 34, where Cremutius Cordus, prosecuted for eulogising Brutus and Cassius, in his defence maintains the right of free speech." — Hales.

[8] Caius Julius **Cæsar Octavianus** was the name of the Emperor Augustus.

[9] Publius Ovidius **Naso** (43 B.C.–18 A.D.), the poet, whose *Amores* and *Ars Amatoria* have passages of such lasciviousness

ished in his old age, for the wanton poems of his youth, was but a mere covert of state over some secret cause: and besides, the books were neither banished nor called in. From hence [1] we shall meet with little else but tyranny in the Roman empire, that we may not marvel, if not so often bad as good books were silenced. I shall therefore deem to have been large enough, in producing what among the ancients was punishable to write, save only which, all other arguments were free to treat on.

By this time the emperors [2] were become Christians, whose discipline in this point I do not find to have been more severe than what was formerly in practice. The books of those whom they took to be grand heretics were examined, refuted, and condemned in the general councils; [3] and not till then were prohibited, or burnt, by authority of the emperor. As for the writings of heathen authors, unless they were plain

as might well have brought on him from Augustus the sentence of banishment. He was exiled when he was 51, at the end of 8 A.D. For the *secret cause:* "it is highly probable that he (Ovid) witnessed without preventing the guilty act of some member of the Imperial family, perhaps under the erroneous impression that Augustus himself knew of it and connived at it. . . . The whole of Ovid's works were removed from the three public libraries." — T. and S. I, 494.

[1] **From hence**: from the time of Augustus.

[2] Constantine reigned from 306–337; he issued the edict of toleration in 313.

[3] "The first Christian emperor and his successors exercised a large measure of control in ecclesiastical affairs. They assumed to fill, on their own authority, the highest episcopal offices. They convoked general councils, and presided over them by their representatives, and published conciliar decrees as laws of the empire." Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*, 99. Constantine called the first general council in 325 at Nicæa in Bithynia, to decide regarding the Arian heresy.

invectives against Christianity, as those of Porphyrius[1] and Proclus,[2] they met with no interdict that can be cited, till about the year 400, in a Carthaginian Council, wherein bishops themselves were forbid to read the books of Gentiles, but heresies they might read: while others long before them, on the contrary, scrupled[3] more the books of heretics than of Gentiles. And that the primitive councils[4] and bishops were wont only to declare what books were not commendable, passing[5] no further, but leaving it to each one's conscience to read or to lay by, till after the year 800, is observed already by Padre Paolo,[6] the great un-

[1] **Porphyrius** (233?–304?), a disciple of the Neo-Platonist Plotinus, wrote *Against the Christians*, a treatise in fifteen books. His works were burned by order of the Emperor Theodosius II in 435.

[2] **Proclus** (411–495), the most important of the later Platonists, who taught at Athens, wrote and spoke much against the Christians. "There was one Religion which he could not tolerate, which he could not interpret — that was Christianity." — Lewis, I, 404.

[3] **scrupled**: Does this differ from the present use? See *P. L.* IX, 997 and *P. R.* II, 331.

[4] **councils**: there were nineteen of these general councils between 325 and 1563. See Appendix to Fisher, *History of the Christian Church*.

[5] **passing**: going, proceeding. See *P. L.* III, 498.

[6] **Padre Paolo** (1552–1623), the name taken by Pietro Sarpi when he became a Servite monk. He was, because of his great learning, employed by the Dukes of Mantua, by his own Order, and finally by Venice in its conflict with Paul V for secular as well as religious control. Sarpi desired complete separation from Rome, but this he did not gain. He did gain, however, the points at issue, but was himself compelled to hide from the assassin who sought his life. He lived, after 1607, in his cloister the life of a student, writing against the abuses of the church; his chief work was a *History of the Council of Trent*, translated by Nathanael Brent and published in London 1620. The passage referred to reads (p. 472): "After the yeere 800, the Popes

masker of the Trentine Council.[1] After which time the Popes of Rome, engrossing [2] what they pleased of political rule into their own hands, extended their dominion over men's eyes, as they had before over their judgments, burning and prohibiting to be read what they fancied not; yet sparing in their censures, and the books not many which they so dealt with; till Martin V,[3] by his bull,[4] not only prohibited, but was the first that excommunicated [5] the reading of heretical books; for about that time Wyclif [6] and Huss [7] growing terrible, were they who first drove the Papal

of Rome, as they assumed a great part of the politique government, so they caused the bookes, whose authors they did condemne, to bee burned, and forbad the reading of them."

[1] The Council was held at Trent in the Tyrol from 1545 to 1563, there being twenty-five sessions. Among the many things determined, the chief were: it condemned the Reformation; promised obedience to the Pope; asserted transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the mass; forbade any one to read the Bible without a license, and imposed restrictions on printers of the Bible; and it appointed a committee to examine the whole question of heretical books, but finally left the decision of this matter to the Pope.

[2] **engrossing**: gaining and keeping possession of. See *P. L.* v, 775.

[3] **Martin V**, elected by the Council of Constance, was Pope 1417–1431. He used every possible means to establish the power and right of the Pope over the councils.

[4] **bull**: Latin *Bulla* (q. v.). See also the *N. E. D.*

[5] What is the common construction? I find no other instance of this use.

[6] **Wyclif** (1324 ?–1384). Milton says, *P. W.* III, 92: "For first it may be denied that bishops were our first reformers, for Wickliff was before them, and his egregious labours are not to be neglected." Again *P. W.* II, 368: "our Wickliffe's preaching, at which all the succeeding reformers more effectually lighted their tapers, was to his countrymen but a short blaze, soon damped and stifled by the pope and prelates for six or seven kings' reigns."

[7] **Huss** (1369–1415), the Bohemian reformer who, condemned by the Council of Constance, was burned at the stake.

Court to a stricter policy of prohibiting. Which course Leo X[1] and his successors followed,[2] until the Council of Trent and the Spanish Inquisition, engendering together, brought forth, or perfected those catalogues, and expurging indexes, that rake through the entrails of many an old good author, with a violation worse than any could be offered to his tomb.

Nor did they stay in matters heretical, but any subject that was not to their palate, they either condemned in a Prohibition,[3] or had it straight into the new Purgatory of an Index.[4] To fill up the measure

[1] **Leo X** was Pope 1513–1521.

[2] "Paul IV also ordayned that an *Index* should be composed by that office and printed, and so it was in the yeere 1559, in which they did proceed many steps further than formerly they had done, and laid foundations to maintaine and make great the authority of the Court of Rome, by depriving men of that knowledge, which is necessary to defend them from usurpations. . . . This *Index* was divided into three parts. The first conteyneth the names of those all whose works, of what argument soever, though prophane, are forbidden. . . . The second conteyneth the names of the bookes which are particularly condemned, others of the same authours not being condemned. In the third, some bookes are condemned without a name, but onely by a generall rule, that all those are forbidden which beare not the names of the authours, written after the yeere 1519, and many authours and bookes are condemned which for 300, 200 and 100 yeeres have beene commonly read by the learned in the Church of Rome." — Paolo, *History of the Council of Trent*, p. 473.

[3] **Prohibition**: *The Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, the list of books Roman Catholics are forbidden to read. The rules for this list were drawn up by the committee of the Council of Trent, but this *Index* was first published by Pius IV, in 1564. Clement VIII, 1596, prepared an appendix ; these two, together with the books added each year, form the present *Index*.

[4] **Purgatory**: *The Index Expurgatorius*, which contains the passages to be expurgated in those books otherwise permitted to be read. This also was proposed by the committee of the Council of Trent ; it was first published in 1571.

of encroachment, their last invention was to ordain that no book, pamphlet, or paper should be printed (as if St. Peter had bequeathed them the keys of the press also out of Paradise) unless it were approved and licensed under the hands of two or three glutton friars. For example:

Let the Chancellor Cini be pleased to see if in this present work be contained aught that may withstand the printing.

Vincent Rabbatta, Vicar[1] of Florence.

I have seen this present work, and find nothing athwart[2] the Catholic faith and good manners: in witness whereof I have given, &c.

Nicolo Cini, Chancellor of Florence.

Attending[3] the precedent relation,[4] it is allowed that this present work of Davanzati[5] may be printed.

Vincent Rabatta, &c.

It may be printed, July 15.

Friar Simon Mompei d'Amelia,
Chancellor of the Holy Office in Florence.

Sure they have a conceit, if he of the bottomless pit had not long since broke prison,[6] that this quadruple exorcism would bar him down. I fear their next design will be to get into their custody the licensing

[1] **Vicar**: an ecclesiastic who assists a bishop, and who exercises authority in his name.

[2] **athwart**: see *P. L.* II, 683.

[3] **Attending**: following upon, as a result of.

[4] **relation**: account, report. See *P. L.* V, 556; *S. A.* 1595.

[5] Bernardo **Davanzati** Bostichi of Florence, 1529–1606. The book referred to is *Dello Scisma d' Inghilterra*, a history of the Church in England from 1501 to the death of Henry VIII. In such a writing there might be much *athwart the Catholic faith*.

[6] **broke prison**: see *P. L.* IV, 878; "as my Antigonus to break his grave and come again to me." — *Winter's Tale* V, i, 42–43.

of that which they say Claudius intended, but went not through with. Vouchsafe to see another of their forms, the Roman stamp:

Imprimatur,[1] If it seem good to the reverend Master of the Holy Palace,

Belcastro, Vicegerent.

Imprimatur,

Friar Nicolo Rodolphi,
Master of the Holy Palace.

Sometimes five Imprimaturs are seen together, dialoguewise, in the piazza of one title-page, complimenting and ducking[2] each to other with their shaven reverences, whether the author, who stands by in perplexity at the foot of his epistle, shall to the press or to the sponge.[3] These are the pretty responsories,[4] these are the dear antiphonies,[5] that so bewitched of late our prelates and their chaplains, with the goodly

[1] **Imprimatur**: "Let it be printed." The mark of the official licenser, authorizing the printing of a book. In 1641 Milton had said (*P. W.* III, 47): "it were hard if the freeborn people of England, with whom the voice of truth for these many years, even against the proverb, hath not been heard but in corners, after all your monkish prohibitions, and expurgatorious indexes, your gags and snaffles, your proud Imprimaturs not to be obtained without the shallow surview, but not shallow hand of some mercenary, narrow-souled, and illiterate chaplain . . . if now the concealed, the aggrieved, and long-persecuted truth, could not be suffered to speak."

[2] **ducking**: see *Comus*, 960.

> "Those, kind of knaves I know, which in this plainnes
> Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends
> Than twenty silly ducking observants
> That stretch their duties nicely."
>
> *Lear*, II, ii, 109.

[3] **sponge**: see *P. R.* IV, 329.

[4] **responsories**: the psalm, or a portion of it, sung between the readings of the missal.

[5] **antiphonies**: the answering songs of the two parts of the choir, the one to the other.

echo they made; and besotted us to the gay imitation of a lordly Imprimatur, one from Lambeth House,[1] another from the west end of Paul's; [2] so apishly Romanising, that the word of command still was set down in Latin; as if the learned grammatical pen that wrote it would cast no ink without Latin; or perhaps, as they thought, because no vulgar tongue [3] was worthy to express the pure conceit [4] of an Imprimatur; but rather, as I hope, for that our English, the language of men, ever famous and foremost in the achievements of liberty, will not easily find servile letters enow to spell such a dictatory presumption English.[5]

And thus ye have the inventors and the original of book-licensing ripped up [6] and drawn as lineally as any pedigree. We have it not, that can be heard of, from any ancient state, or polity, or church, nor by any statute left us by our ancestors elder or later; nor from the modern custom of any reformed city or church

[1] **Lambeth House**: the London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury. "All other Books, whether of Divinitie, Phisicke, Philosophie, Poetry, or whatsoever, shall be allowed by the Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, or Bishop of *London* for the time being, or by their appointment." *A Decree of the Star-Chamber*, 1637, *Item* III.

[2] **Paul's**: "With great Honour and Reverence conducted him (King Edward the Fifth) thro' their city to the Bishop of London's Palace, near St. Paul's Church."—*A Complete History of England with the Lives of all the Kings and Queens thereof*, I, 486. London, 1719.

[3] **vulgar tongue**: that is, one not Latin, the language of the learned.

[4] **conceit**: idea, notion, "The horrible conceit of death and night."—*Romeo and Juliet*, IV, iii, 37.

[5] The *N. E. D.* gives only one instance of the word *English* as a quasi-adverb.

[6] **ripped up**: "to rip up wrong that battell once hath tried," *F. Q.* IV, ix, 37.

abroad; but from the most anti-christian council and the most tyrannous inquisition that ever inquired.

Till then books were ever as freely admitted into the world as any other birth;[1] the issue of the brain was no more stifled than the issue of the womb; no envious Juno[2] sat cross-legged over the nativity of any man's intellectual offspring; but if it proved a monster, who denies but that it was justly burnt, or sunk into the sea. But that a book, in worse condition than a peccant soul, should be to stand before a jury ere it be born to the world, and undergo yet in darkness the judgment of Radamanth[3] and his colleagues, ere it can pass the ferry[4] backward into light, was never heard before, till that mysterious iniquity,[5] provoked and troubled at the first entrance of reformation, sought out new limbos[6] and new hells wherein they

[1] **birth**: see *P. L.* IX, 624; XI, 687; *P. R.* II, 71.

[2] **Juno**: Alcmena was about to give birth to Heracles, the son of Zeus, when jealous Hera sent to hinder the birth for seven days, that Eurystheus might be born first, and so win the promise of power which Zeus had said should be to the descendant of Perseus born on that day. "She came (the goddess of birth), indeed, but corrupted beforehand, and she had the intention to give my life to the vengeful Juno. And when she heard my groans, she seated herself upon that altar before the door, and pressing her left knee with her right knee, her fingers being joined together in the form of a comb, she retarded my delivery." — Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, IX, fable III.

[3] **Radamanth**: a son of Zeus and Europa, who, because of his justice, was associated with his brothers, Minos and Æacus, as judges in the lower world. See *Æneid*, VI, 562 ff.

[4] **the ferry**: read *Æneid*, VI, 295 ff., also Dante's description in the *Inferno* III, 86 ff.

[5] **that mysterious iniquity**: the woman of Rev. XVII. "The Church reformers of the sixteenth century confidently identified this woman with the Papacy." — Hales.

[6] **limbos**: The meaning of the sentence is: the books of Italy, like those persons within the church, could be lawfully

might include our books also within the number of their damned. And this was the rare morsel so officiously snatched up, and so ill-favoredly imitated by our inquisiturient[1] bishops, and the attendant minorities,[2] their chaplains. That ye like not now these most certain authors of this licensing order, and that all sinister intention was far distant from your thoughts, when ye were importuned the passing it, all men who know the integrity of your actions, and how ye honor truth, will clear ye readily.

[3] But some will say, what though the inventors were bad, the thing for all that may be good. It may so; yet if that thing be no such deep invention, but obvious and easy for any man to light on, and yet best and wisest commonwealths through all ages and occasions have forborne to use it, and falsest seducers and oppressors of men were the first who took it up, and to no other purpose but to obstruct and hinder the first approach of reformation; I am of those who believe, it will be a harder alchymy[4] than Lul-

judged; the books of others, like the patriarchs and the philosophers who were born before Christ and like infants unbaptized, must have *limbos* provided for them. The church recognized two limbos situated on the borders of hell: the *Limbus patrum*, the abode of the just who had died before Christ's coming, and the *Limbus puerorum*, the place of unbaptized infants. See Dante's *Inferno* IV. Popular opinion conceived also a *Limbus fatuorum*, for which see *P. L.* III, 495 ff. See also Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, V, 113 ff.

[1] **inquisiturient**: eager to play the inquisitor. On what principle in Latin grammar has Milton coined this word?

[2] **minorities**: the Franciscans were called Friars Minor or Minorities. Here the sense seems to be, "Chaplains who resemble monks in the service of the Inquisition" — Jebb.

[3] This paragraph is a transition to the discussion of the second proposition, which begins in the next paragraph.

[4] **alchymy**: task or achievement in alchymy.

lius[1] ever knew, to sublimate[2] any good use out of such an invention. Yet this only is what I request to gain from this reason, that it may be held a dangerous and suspicious fruit, as certainly it deserves, for the tree that bore it, until I can dissect one by one the properties it has. But I have first to finish, as was propounded, what is to be thought in general of reading books, whatever sort they be, and whether be more the benefit or the harm that thence proceeds?

Not to insist upon the examples of Moses, Daniel,[3] and Paul, who were skilful in all the learning of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Greeks, which could not probably be without reading their books of all sorts; in Paul especially, who thought it no defilement to insert into Holy Scripture the sentences[4] of three Greek poets,[5] and one of them a tragedian; the ques-

[1] **Lullius**: Raymond Lully (1235 ?–1315), born at Palma, in the island of Majorca, was of Italian parentage. He was at one time well-known as an alchemist, but he was most famous as the inventor of a curious system of logic by which, in a mechanical way, any answer to any question could be obtained. He thought by this to convert the Mohammedans from the error of their belief. He sought to interest all Europe in his scheme, and went himself three times as a missionary to Mohammedan Africa.

[2] **sublimate**: see *P. L.* I, 235; V, 483.

[3] See Acts, VII, 22, and Daniel, I, 17. There is no evidence for the learning of Paul outside the New Testament, but coming from Tarsus he would have at least the opportunity of this learning, for Tarsus was "one of the three great university cities of the Mediterranean world. Strabo (14, 5, 13, p. 673) speaks of the Tarsian University as even surpassing in some respects those of Athens and Alexandria." — Hasting, *Dictionary of the Bible.*

[4] **sentences**: sayings, maxims.

[5] The three are: "In him we live and move and have our being," Acts, XVII, 28, from Aratus (see p. 17), or possibly from the *Hymn to Zeus* of Cleanthes; "the Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies," Titus, I, 12, from Epimenides of the sixth century; "evil communications corrupt good manners,"

tion was notwithstanding sometimes controverted among the primitive doctors, but with great odds on that side which affirmed it both lawful and profitable, as was then evidently perceived, when Julian the Apostate[1] and subtlest enemy to our faith, made a decree forbidding Christians the study of heathen learning; for, said he, they wound us with our own weapons, and with our own arts and sciences they overcome us. And, indeed, the Christians were put so to their shifts by this crafty means, and so much in danger to decline into all ignorance, that the two Apollinarii were fain, as a man may say, to coin all the seven liberal sciences[2] out of the Bible, reducing it into divers forms of orations, poems, dialogues, even to the calculating of a new Christian grammar. But, saith the historian Socrates,[3] the providence of God

1 Cor. xv, 33, from a fragment of Euripides. See Milton's *Introduction* to Samson Agonistes. But Jerome and Grotius, the publishers of Menander, say this last is from the *Thais* of Menander. Possibly it was a proverbial saying older than either poet. See Todd's *Milton*, v, 314.

[1] **Julian the Apostate** (331–63), a nephew of Constantine the Great, was brought up in the Christian faith, but became a convert to the old Roman gods, and during his short term as Emperor (361–63) sought to bring back that worship.

[2] **seven liberal sciences**: see p. 6, n. 6.

[3] **Socrates** Scholasticus (385 ?–440 ?), born and reared in Constantinople; his *History* embraces the period from 306–439. "The law which the Emperor made that the Christians should not be trained up in the liberal sciences, made both the *Apollinariuses* (of whom we spake before) to be of far greater fame. For either of them being skilfull in such arts as direct our stile and orations, the father a Grammarian, the son a Rhetorician, profited very much the Christians, and furthered at that time not a little the Church of God. For the father as a profound Grammarian, framed the art of humanity unto the furtherance of Christian Religion; he turned the five books of Moses into heroical verse, together with other books of the Old Testament which

provided better than the industry of Apollinarius and his son, by taking away that illiterate law with the life of him who devised it.

So great an injury they then held it to be deprived of Hellenic learning; and thought it a persecution more undermining, and secretly decaying the Church, than the open cruelty of Decius[1] or Diocletian.[2] And perhaps it was the same politic drift that the devil whipped St. Jerome[3] in a Lenten dream, for reading

contain histories: partly in hexameter verse, and partly after the form of comedies and tragedies, with the fit application of persons: he wrote in all kind of meter, to the end the Christians should not be ignorant and unskilfull in any rare gift that excelled among the Gentiles. The son, an elegant Rhetorician, brought the writings of the *Evangelists*, and works of the *Apostles* into dialogues, as *Plato* used among the *heathen*. Although their labour and industry seemed available and greatly to set forth the service of God in so much that therby the lewd drift of the Emperor was stopped from taking effect: yet the providence of God did far exceed their careful studies, and dashed also the Emperors wicked device." The *Ecclesiastical History*, tr. by Hamner, London, 1636, pp. 305–6.

[1] **Decius** was emperor 249–251; in his reign occurred the first general persecution of the Christian Church.

[2] **Diocletian** (284–305) sought to stamp out Christianity entirely.

[3] **St. Jerome** (340–420) : "While the old serpent was thus fooling me, about mid-lent a fever entered my marrow and seized on my worn-out body; and without respite so preyed upon my unhappy limbs that scarce did I cleave to my bones. Meanwhile my funeral was being made ready; and, as the chill crept over my whole frame, a vital heat now throbbed only in my poor lukewarm breast; — when suddenly, caught up in the spirit, I was dragged before the tribunal of the Judge: where there was so much light, such splendour from the brightness of those who stood round about, that I cast myself to the earth and dared not look up. Asked of my state, I answered that I was a Christian. Thou liest, he saith, thou art a Ciceronian, not a Christian. For where thy treasure there will be thy heart also. Straightway I was dumb, and under the lash (for He had commanded me to

Cicero; or else it was a phantasm bred by the fever which had then seized him. For had an angel been his discipliner, unless it were for dwelling too much upon Ciceronianisms,[1] and had chastised the reading, not the vanity, it had been plainly partial; first to correct him for grave Cicero, and not for scurril Plautus, whom he confesses to have been reading, not long before; next to correct him only, and let so many more ancient fathers wax old in those pleasant and florid studies without the lash of such a tutoring apparition; insomuch that Basil[2] teaches how some good use may be made of Margites,[3] a sportful poem, not now extant, writ by Homer; and why not then of Morgante,[4] an Italian romance much to the same purpose?

be scourged), was tormented yet more by the fire of conscience, thinking over that verse in my heart, Who shall confess to Thee in hell? Then began I to cry and to wail, Have mercy on me, O Lord, have mercy. Those words resounded amid the blows." — *Select Library of the Nicene Fathers*, second series, VI, 35.

[1] During the middle of the sixteenth century the writers of Italy strove to attain a pure Latin style, especially that of Cicero. The chief of the Ciceronian school was Bembo, who would not use "a word or phrase which could not be justified by the practice of what was called the golden age, but even insisted on that of Cicero himself, as the only model." Erasmus wrote his *Ciceronianus* to ridicule these purists. — Hallam, *Literature of the Middle Ages*, I, 327.

[2] **Basil** was bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, 370–79.

[3] **Margites**: this was a humorous poem — only four lines of which remain — named from the hero, a rich, conceited, stupid person, who is made the butt of much fun. The authorship is not certain, but Milton follows Plato, *Second Alcibiades*, 147, and Aristotle, *Poetics*, IV, 10 ("His Margites bears the same relation to Comedy that the Iliad and Odyssey do to Tragedy") in attributing it to Homer.

[4] **Morgante**: Luigi Pulci (1431–87) wrote a mock-romance, called *Morgante Maggiore*, which was published at Venice 1488. He brought ridicule upon romance literature by burlesquing the

But if it be agreed we shall be tried by visions, there is a vision recorded by Eusebius,[1] far ancienter than this tale of Jerome to the nun Eustochium, and, besides, has nothing of a fever in it. Dionysius [2] Alexandrinus was, about the year 240, a person of great name in the church for piety and learning, who had wont to avail himself much against heretics by being conversant in their books; until a certain presbyter laid it scrupulously to his conscience, how he durst venture himself among those defiling volumes. The worthy man, loth to give offence,[3] fell into a new debate with himself what was to be thought; when suddenly a vision sent from God (it is his own epistle that so avers it) confirmed him in these words: "Read any books whatever come to thy hands, for thou art sufficient both to judge aright, and to examine each matter." To this revelation he assented the sooner, as he confesses, because it was answerable to that of the Apostle to the Thessalonians: "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." [4]

And he might have added another remarkable saying of the same author: "To the pure, all things are pure"; [5] not only meats and drinks, but all kind of knowledge whether of good or evil; the knowledge

characters and introducing much that was not relevant. "Bearing the same relation to the poetry as Don Quixote to the prose of chivalry."—Jebb. See Sismondi, *Literature of Europe*, I, 322–24.

[1] **Eusebius**, Bishop of Cæsarea from about 314 to the year of his death 340. He is sometimes called the *Father of Ecclesiastical History*, as he was the first who sought to write an organized account of the church.

[2] **Dionysius**, Bishop of Alexandria, 247–65.

[3] **give offence**: cause anyone to commit sin. See *S. A.* 767, 1218, also Isaiah, VIII, 14.

[4] 1 Thess. V, 21.

[5] Titus I, 15. See *P. L.* V, 117–20.

cannot defile, nor consequently the books, if the will and conscience be not defiled. For books are as meats and viands are; some of good, some of evil substance; and yet God in that unapocryphal vision, said without exception, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat,"[1] leaving the choice to each man's discretion. Wholesome meats to a vitiated stomach differ little or nothing from unwholesome; and best books to a naughty[2] mind are not unappliable to occasions of evil. Bad meats will scarce breed good nourishment in the healthiest concoction;[3] but herein the difference is of bad books, that they to a discreet and judicious reader serve in many respects to discover, to confute, to forewarn, and to illustrate.

Whereof what better witness can ye expect I should produce, than one of your own now sitting in Parliament, the chief of learned men reputed in this land, Mr. Selden;[4] whose volume of natural and national laws proves, not only by great authorities brought to-

[1] Acts x, 9–16.

[2] **naughty**: morally bad, wicked. "A naughty person, a wicked man," Proverbs, VI, 12; frequently in Shakespeare; the oft-quoted "so shines a good deed in a naughty world," *Merchant of Venice*, v, i, 91.

[3] **concoction**: see p. 26, n. 4.

[4] **Mr. Selden** (1584–1654) was, as Milton says, called the most learned man in England. He was a lawyer and member of Parliament, who, when out of favor at court, devoted his hours to writing. Ben Jonson styles him "Monarch in letters" (see his poem to Selden, *Underwoods*, XXXI). Anthony Wood calls him (*Athenæ Oxoniensis*, II, 107, London, 1692) "a prodigie in most parts of learning." The book referred to is *De Jure et Gentium juxta disciplinum Hebræorum*, which Milton again refers to (*P. W.* III, 269) "that noble volume written by our learned Selden, 'Of the Law of Nature and of Nations,' a work more useful and more worthy to be perused by whosoever studies to be a great man in wisdom, equity, and justice, than all those 'decretals and sumless sums,' which the pontifical clerks have doted on."

gether, but by exquisite[1] reasons and theorems[2] almost mathematically demonstrative, that all opinions, yea errors, known, read, and collated, are of main service and assistance toward the speedy attainment of what is truest.

I conceive, therefore, that when God did enlarge the universal diet of man's body, saving ever the rules of temperance,[3] he then also, as before, left arbitrary the dieting and repasting[4] of our minds; as wherein every mature man might have to exercise his own leading capacity. How great a virtue is temperance,[3] how much of moment through the whole life of man! Yet God commits the managing so great a trust, without particular law or prescription, wholly to the demeanor[5] of every grown man. And, therefore, when he himself tabled the Jews from heaven, that omer,[6] which was every man's daily portion of manna, is computed to have been more than might have well sufficed the heartiest feeder thrice as many meals. For those actions which enter into a man, rather than issue out of him,[7] and therefore defile not, God uses not to captivate[8] under a perpetual childhood of pre-

[1] **exquisite** : carefully chosen, excellent. See *P. R.* II, 346, also *Twelfth Night*, II, iii, 155.

[2] Why does he not use *theories*?

[3] **temperance** : "holy dictate of spare Temperance" (*Comus*, 767). Read the following passages in which Milton explains and extols *temperance*: *P. L.* VII, 126 ff. ; XI, 530–38 ; XI, 805 ; XII, 583. It was one of the four cardinal virtues ; see Dante's *Purgatorio*, XXIX, 130.

[4] **repasting** : Shakespeare uses this once, *Hamlet*, IV, v, 147.

[5] **demeanor** : management.

[6] **omer** : see Exodus, XVI, 16–36.

[7] Matt. XV, 17–20 ; Mark, VII, 15–23.

[8] **captivate** : hold captive, subjugate. "Upon their woes whom fortune captivates," *III Henry VI*, I, iv, 115.

scription, but trusts him with the gift of reason to be his own chooser;[1] there were but little work left for preaching, if law and compulsion should grow so fast upon those things which heretofore were governed only by exhortation. Solomon informs us, that much reading is a weariness to the flesh;[2] but neither he nor other inspired author tells us that such or such reading is unlawful; yet certainly had God thought good to limit us herein, it had been much more expedient to have told us what was unlawful, than what was wearisome.

As for the burning of those Ephesian books by St. Paul's converts;[3] 'tis replied the books were magic, the Syriac so renders them. It was a private act, a voluntary act, and leaves us to a voluntary imitation: the men in remorse burnt those books which were their own; the magistrate by this example is not appointed;[4] these men practised the books, another might perhaps have read them in some sort usefully.

Good and evil we know in the field of this world grow up together[5] almost inseparably; and the knowledge of good is so involved and interwoven with the knowledge of evil, and in so many cunning resemblances hardly to be discerned, that those confused seeds which were imposed upon Psyche[6] as an inces-

[1] See *P. L.* III, 97–99, 120–28; V, 235–58.

[2] Eccles. XII, 12, also p. 5, n. 2.

[3] Acts, XIX, 19.

[4] **appointed**: decided, determined. See *N. E. D.*

[5] "For two urns stand upon the floor of Zeus filled with his evil gifts, and one with blessings. To whomsoever Zeus whose joy is in the lightning dealeth a mingled lot, that man chanceth now upon ill and now again on good." — *Iliad,* XXIV, 527–30. See Matt. XIII, 30.

[6] The story of Cupid and Psyche is told in the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius, bks. IV–VI. Venus, jealous of Psyche because she was

sant labor to cull out, and sort asunder, were not more intermixed. It was from out the rind of one apple tasted, that the knowledge of good and evil,[1] as two twins[2] cleaving together, leaped forth into the world. And perhaps this is that doom which Adam fell into of knowing good and evil, that is to say, of knowing good by evil.[1]

As, therefore, the state of man now is; what wisdom can there be to choose, what continence to forbear without the knowledge of evil? He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming

the beloved of Cupid, set her various tasks, among them that mentioned here: "Then, taking wheat, barley, millet, poppy, vetches, lentils, and beans, and, mixing them altogether in one heap, she said to her: 'You seem to me, such an ugly slave as you now are, to be likely to gain lovers in no other way than by diligent drudgery. I will, therefore, myself, for once, make trial of your industrious habits. Take and separate this promiscuous mass of seeds, and having properly placed each grain in its place, and so sorted the whole, give me a proof of your expedition, by finishing the task before evening.' Then having delivered over to her the vast heap of seeds, she at once took her departure for the nuptial banquet."

"But Psyche, astounded at the stupendous task, sat silent and stupefied, and did not move a hand to the confused and inextricable mass. Just then, a tiny little ant, one of the inhabitants of the fields, became aware of this prodigious difficulty. . . . it ran busily about and summoned together the whole tribe of ants in the neighborhood, crying to them, 'Take pity on her, ye active children of the all-producing earth!'" (Bohn edition, p. 116.) So with the aid of the ants the task was all accomplished within the time specified. Read the beautiful poem of William Morris, *The Story of Cupid and Psyche.*

[1] "ye shall be as gods, knowing both good and evil." — Gen. III, 5.

"Since our eyes
Opened we find indeed, and find we know
Both good and evil, good lost and evil got."
P. L. IX, 107-72; also *P. L.* IV, 222; IX, 722, 752.

[2] **two twins**: "two blissful twins are to be born," *Comus*, 1010.

pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer [1] that which is truly better, he is the true wayfaring Christian. I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortal garland is to be run for,[2] not without dust and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world; we bring impurity much rather; that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary. That virtue, therefore, which is but a youngling in the contemplation of evil, and knows not the utmost that vice promises to her followers, and rejects it, is but a blank [3] virtue, not a pure; her whiteness is but an excremental [4] whiteness; which was the reason why our sage and serious poet Spenser,[5] whom I dare be known to think a better teacher than Scotus [6]

[1] Note the choice of these verbs.

[2] Phil. III, 14; I Cor. IX, 24.

[3] **blank**: colorless, ineffectual, helpless. See *P. L.* IX, 890; *Comus*, 452.

[4] **excremental**: superficial. From what Latin word? The *excrement* was that which grew out, especially the hair and nails. "dally with my excrement, with my mustachio." —*Love's Labour's Lost*, V. i, 109; also *Comedy of Errors*, II, ii, 79; *Winter's Tale*, IV, iv, 734.

[5] **Spenser**: Dryden in his *Preface* to the *Fables* says, "Milton was the poetical son of Spenser, and Mr. Waller of Fairfax. . . . Milton has acknowledged to me that Spenser was his original." (Globe edition, p. 494.) See *Il. P.* 116–20. In *P. W.* III, 84, Milton calls Spenser "our admired Spenser," and quotes at some length from the *Eclogue* for May.

[6] John Duns **Scotus** (1265?–1308), a Franciscan, and the schoolman who was famous as a teacher both at Oxford and Paris. He was the leader of the Scotists in opposition to the Thomists, the followers of Thomas Aquinas. Against them, he defended the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, winning by his dialectical skill the title of *Doctor Subtilis*. In opposition to them, he believed in predestination; he held that the will was

or Aquinas,[1] describing true temperance under the person of Guion, brings him in with his palmer through the cave of Mammon,[2] and the bower of earthly bliss, that he might see and know, and yet abstain.

Since, therefore, the knowledge and survey of vice is in this world so necessary to the constituting of human virtue, and the scanning of error to the confirmation of truth, how can we more safely, and with less danger, scout[3] into the regions of sin and falsity, than by reading all manner of tractates and hearing all manner of reason? And this is the benefit which may be had of books promiscuously read.

But of the harm that may result hence, three kinds are usually reckoned. First, is feared the infection that may spread; but then all human learning and controversy in religious points must remove out of the world, yea the Bible itself; for that ofttimes relates blasphemy not nicely,[4] it describes the carnal sense of wicked men not unelegantly, it brings in holiest men passionately murmuring against Providence[5] through all the arguments of Epicurus; in other great disputes

free, that revelation was the only source of knowledge, and that the existence of God could not be proved.

[1] Thomas **Aquinas** (1225 ?–1274), called the *Serafic Doctor*, lectured at Paris, Rome, and Bologna. He taught that knowledge is the supreme end of life, and that there are two sources of knowledge, reason and revelation. His great work *Summa Theologiæ* was an attempt to bring into systematic order and logical relation all revealed doctrines.

[2] Read Spenser's *Faerie Queen*, II, vii. "The Palmer was *not* with him in the Cave of Mammon; see II, viii, 3." — Hales.

[3] **scout**: see *P. L.* II, 133; also for a similar use of the noun, *P. L.* III, 543; VI, 529; *Comus*, 138.

[4] **nicely**: fastidiously. "To taste think not I shall be nice," *P. L.* V, 433; "a nice and subtle happiness," *P. L.* VIII, 399.

[5] Illustrate these three points from the Bible. **Epicurus**, see p. 45, n. 6.

it answers dubiously and darkly to the common reader; and asks a Talmudist[1] what ails the modesty of his marginal Keri,[2] that Moses and all the prophets cannot persuade him to pronounce the textual Chetiv. For these causes we all know the Bible itself put by the Papist into the first rank of prohibited books. The ancientest fathers must be next removed, as Clement of Alexandria,[3] and that Eusebian book of Evangelic preparation[4] transmitting our ears through a hoard of heathenish obscenities to receive the Gospel. Who finds not that Irenæus,[5] Epipha-

[1] **Talmudist**: one believing in the Talmud, the Jewish code gathered from oral tradition, and explaining the written law of the Pentateuch.

[2] **Keri**, that which is read. **Chetiv**, that which is written. When a passage in the text seemed unfit to read, a gloss was written in the margin. Milton discusses the question of this paragraph in *P. W.* III, 131. "Whereas God, who is the author both of purity and eloquence, chose this phrase (which he gives in the context) as fittest in that vehement character wherein he spake. Otherwise that plain word might have easily been forborne: which the mazoreths and rabbinical scholiasts, not well intending, have often used to blur the margin with Keri instead of Ketiv, and gave us this insulse rule out of their Talmud, 'That all words which in the law are written obscenely, must be changed to more civil words': fools, who would teach men to read more decently than God thought good to write."

[3] **Clement of Alexandria** (about 200 A.D.), a presbyter in the church of Alexandria, wrote, among other works, a *Hortatory Address to the Greeks*, in which he sought to persuade them to give up their religion. With this end in view, he described many of their religious practices — often very obscene — to show the absurdity and futility of these customs.

[4] **Eusebius**; see p. 65, n. 1. The book here referred to is the *Preparatio Evangelica*, which is a collection of quotations from pagan philosophers, intended to prepare the mind of the reader to receive the Christian doctrine.

[5] **Irenæus** (140?–202?) Bishop of Lyons, wrote *Against Heresies* to combat the heresy of the Gnostics.

nius,[1] Jerome,[2] and others discover[3] more heresies than they well confute, and that oft for heresy which is the truer opinion?

Nor boots it[4] to say for these, and all the heathen writers of greatest infection, if it must be thought so, with whom is bound up the life of human learning, that they writ in an unknown tongue, so long as we are sure those languages are known as well to the worst of men, who are both most able and most diligent to instil the poison they suck, first into the courts of princes, acquainting them with the choicest delights, and criticisms[5] of sin. As perhaps did that Petronius[6] whom Nero called his Arbiter, the master of his revels;[7] and the notorious ribald of Arezzo,[8] dreaded and yet dear to the Italian courtiers. I name not him for posterity's sake, whom Henry VIII named in merriment his

[1] **Epiphanius** (315–403) was Bishop of Constantia, the ancient Salamis, in Cyprus. His chief work, *Panarion*, is a description and refutation of eighty heresies.

[2] **Jerome**; see p. 63, n. 3.

[3] **discover**: uncover, make known. "Law can discover sin," *P. L.* XII, 290; also *P. L.* XI, 267.

[4] **boots it**: see *Lyc.* 64; *S. A.* 560; "it shall scarce boot me to say 'not guilty,'" *Winter's Tale*, III, ii, 26.

[5] **criticisms**: the nice points, the subtleties. See quotations in the *N. E. D.*

[6] **Petronius** was called *elegantiæ arbiter* because he was a judge in all questions of luxurious and licentious living. Tacitus tells his story in the *Annals*, XVI, 18, 19. He wrote a novel in twenty books, which from the remains seems to have been, although very obscene, written with great art. See *T.* and *S.* II, 84.

[7] What did this title mean in Milton's time?

[8] Pietro Aretino (1492–1557) was banished first from Arezzo and then from Rome for his satirical and obscene writings. Being very poor, he obtained money by writing laudatory verses for the great, who gave to him through fear of having his biting satire directed against themselves.

Vicar of hell.[1] By which compendious way all the contagion that foreign books can infuse, will find a passage to the people far easier and shorter than an Indian voyage,[2] though it could be sailed either by the north of Cathay eastward, or of Canada westward, while our Spanish licensing gags the English press never so severely.

But, on the other side, that infection which is from books of controversy in religion, is more doubtful and dangerous to the learned than to the ignorant; and yet those books must be permitted untouched by the licenser. It will be hard to instance where any ignorant man hath been ever seduced by papistical book in English, unless it were commended and expounded to him by some of that clergy; and indeed all such tractates, whether false or true, are as the prophecy of Isaiah was to the eunuch,[3] "not to be understood without a guide." But of our priests and doctors how many have been corrupted by studying the comments of Jesuits and Sorbonists,[4] and how fast they could

[1] It is uncertain to whom Milton here alludes under a title which is a parody of the Pope's title "Vicar of Christ." Wolsey and Thomas Cromwell have both been suggested.

[2] The desire in Milton's time was to find a shorter way of reaching India and China than the long overland route; a northeast, and also a northwest passage, had been proposed. See *P. L.* x, 289–93. In his *History of Muscovia* is an interesting description of the imperial city of Cathay; *P. W.* v, 407.

[3] Acts, VIII, 28–35.

[4] **Sorbonists**: Robert de Sorbon founded in 1252 a school for poor students in Paris. This soon became the meeting place for all students of the University of Paris, and finally the name was applied to the whole University. The Sorbonne now signifies the faculties of literature, science, and theology. Milton again gives his opinion in *P. W.* I, 85: "Finding yourself [Salmasius] destitute of any assistance or help from orthodox protestant divines, you have the impudence to betake yourself to

transfuse that corruption into the people, our experience is both late and sad. It is not forgot, since the acute and distinct Arminius[1] was perverted merely by the perusing of a nameless[2] discourse written at Delft, which at first he took in hand to confute.

Seeing, therefore, that those books, and those in great abundance, which are likeliest to taint both life and doctrine, cannot be suppressed without the fall of learning, and of all ability in disputation;[3] and that these books of either sort are most and soonest catching to the learned, from whom to the common people whatever is heretical or dissolute may quickly be conveyed; and that evil manners are as perfectly learned without books a thousand other ways which cannot be stopped; and evil doctrine not with books can propagate, except a teacher guide, which he might also do without writing, and so beyond prohibiting: I am not able to unfold, how this cautelous[4] enterprise of licensing can be exempted from the number of vain and impossible attempts. And he who were pleasantly disposed, could not well avoid to liken it to the exploit of that gallant man, who thought to pound up the crows by shutting his park gate.

the Sorbonists, whose college you know is devoted to the Romish religion, and consequently but of very weak authority among protestants."

[1] **Arminius** (1560–1609), the learned Dutch theologian, was asked to refute certain theses against predestination. In the course of his study, he became convinced himself, and rejected altogether the Calvinistic doctrine of unconditional election.

[2] **nameless**: anonymous.

[3] **disputation**: see the part *disputation* played at that time in the education of the university. Masson, I, 193.

[4] **cautelous**: deceitful. "Cautelous baits and practice," *Coriolanus*, IV, i, 33; "Swear priests and cowards and men cautelous," *Julius Cæsar*, II, i, 129.

Besides another inconvenience, if learned men be the first receivers out of books and dispreaders both of vice and error, how shall the licensers themselves be confided in, unless we can confer upon them, or they assume to themselves above all others in the land, the grace of infallibility and uncorruptedness? And again, if it be true, that a wise man, like a good refiner, can gather gold out of the drossiest volume, and that a fool will be a fool with the best book, yea or without book, there is no reason that we should deprive a wise man of any advantage to his wisdom, while we seek to restrain from a fool that which being restrained will be no hindrance to his folly. For if there should be so much exactness always used to keep that from him which is unfit for his reading, we should, in the judgment[1] of Aristotle not only, but of Solomon and of our Saviour, not vouchsafe him good precepts, and by consequence not willingly admit him to good books; as being certain that a wise man will make better use of an idle[2] pamphlet, than a fool will do of sacred Scripture.

[3] 'T is next alleged we must not expose ourselves to temptations without necessity, and, next to that, not employ our time in vain things. To both these objections one answer will serve, out of the grounds already laid; that to all men such books are not temptations nor vanities, but useful drugs and materials wherewith to temper, and compose effective and strong medicines, which man's life cannot want.[4] The rest, as children

[1] Aristotle, *Ethics*, I, iii; X, ix. Prov. XVII, 24; XXIII, 9; and for the *judgment of our Saviour* probably I Cor. I, 18–25.

[2] **idle**: useless. See *P. L.* VI, 839 · VII, 279.

[3] This is a transition paragraph leading to the second point, the argument for which begins in the next paragraph.

[4] **want**: be without. See p. 31, n. 3.

and childish men, who have not the art to qualify [1] and prepare these working minerals, well may be exhorted to forbear, but hindered forcibly they cannot be by all the licensing that sainted Inquisition could ever yet contrive. Which is what I promised to deliver next: that this order of licensing conduces nothing to the end for which it was framed; and hath almost prevented me [2] by being clear already, while thus much hath been explaining. See the ingenuity [3] of Truth, who, when she gets a free and willing hand, opens herself faster than the pace of method and discourse [4] can overtake her.

It was the task which I began with, to show that no nation, or well instituted state, if they valued books at all, did ever use this way of licensing; and it might be answered, that this is a piece of prudence lately discovered. To which I return, that as it was a thing slight and obvious to think on, so if it had been difficult to find out, there wanted not among them long since who suggested such a course; which they not following, leave us a pattern of their judgment that it was not the not knowing, but the not approving, which was the cause of their not using it.

Plato, a man of high authority indeed, but least of all for his commonwealth,[5] in the book of his laws, which

[1] **qualify**: modify the taste or strength of. "I have drunk but one cup to-night, and that was craftily qualified too." — *Othello* II, iii, 41.

[2] **prevented**: gone before, outrun. "For thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness," Ps. XXI. 3; see also *N. O.* 24, and the noun, "at this prevention more incensed," *P. L.* VI, 129.

[3] **ingenuity**: ingenuousness, freedom from reserve.

[4] **discourse**: reasoning. "Either in discourse of thought or actual deed." — *Othello* IV, ii, 153.

[5] In the *Republic* of Plato, Socrates and a group of friends discuss ideal justice, and in so doing treat many questions re-

no city ever yet received, fed his fancy with making many edicts to his airy burgomasters, which they who otherwise admire him, wish had been rather buried and excused in the genial cups of an Academic[1] night sitting. By which laws[2] he seems to tolerate no kind of learning, but by unalterable decree, consisting most of practical traditions, to the attainment whereof a library of smaller bulk than his own dialogues would be abundant. And there also enacts, that no poet should so much as read to any private man[3] what he had written, until the judges and law-keepers had seen it, and allowed it; but that Plato meant this law peculiarly to that commonwealth which he had imagined, and to no other, is evident. Why was he not else a lawgiver to himself, but a transgressor, and to be expelled by his own magistrates;[4] both for the wanton[5] epigrams and dialogues which he made, and his perpetual reading of Sophron[6] Mimus, and Aristoph-

lating to the state. In the *Laws* three men, representatives of Athens, Sparta, and Crete, endeavor to formulate the laws for an ideal commonwealth. The latter is here referred to.

[1] **Academic** : see p. 23, n. 4, and *P. L.* IV. 245 and 278.

[2] Read Plato's discussion of education in the *Laws*, VII, 808–812.

[3] "Shall we make a law that the poet shall compose nothing contrary to the ideas of the lawful, or just, or beautiful, or good, which are allowed in the state? nor shall he be permitted to show his compositions to any private individuals, until he shall have shown them to the appointed judges, and the guardians of the law, and they are satisfied with them." Plato, *Laws*, VII, 801; also II, 659.

[4] In Milton's Latin poem *De Idea Platonica*, he says: "And you Plato, if you were the first to bring such monsters into the schools, call back the poets whom you exiled from your city, for you are the greatest fabler of them all. Bring them in, or else you, the founder, must go out!"

[5] "The epithet is certainly too violent and unsparing." — Hales.

[6] **Sophron** of Syracuse (fifth century B. C.) was the writer of mimes or mimic dialogues. "The Mimes of Sophron were evi-



anes,[1] books of grossest infamy; and also for commending the latter of them, though he were the malicious libeller of his chief friends, to be read by the tyrant Dionysius,[2] who had little need of such trash to spend his time on? But that he knew this licensing of poems had reference and dependence to many other provisos there set down in his fancied republic, which in this world could have no place; and so neither he himself, nor any magistrate, or city ever imitated that course, which, taken apart from those other collateral injunctions, must needs be vain and fruitless.

For if they fell upon [3] one kind of strictness, unless their care were equal to regulate all other things of like aptness to corrupt the mind, that single endeavor they knew would be but a fond [4] labor; to shut and fortify one gate against corruption, and be necessitated to leave others round about wide open.[5] If we

dently very coarse . . . and were full of proverbs, and full of humour, often using *patois*, which is very rare in Greek literature." (Mahaffy, *Greek Classical Literature*, I, part II, 185.) "The mime employs cloth-fullers, shoemakers, butchers, poulterers, fish-dealers, and market-gardeners" (Padelford, tr. of *Scaliger's Poetics*, 57). "And this we know in Laertes, that the mimes of Sophron were of such reckoning with Plato, as to take them nightly to read on, and after make them his pillow" (*P. W.* III, 106). Plato is said to have studied him also to give animation to his own dialogues.

[1] **Aristophanes** (see p. 45, n. 1) cannot be said to have written books of *grossest infamy*. There are, indeed, gross passages, but there is much beautiful poetry, and his aim was certainly to teach and to lead the people to right thinking. He did satirize his friends, as Socrates in *The Clouds*, and Nikias in *The Knights*.

[2] **Dionysius** : see p. 46, n. 2.

[3] **fell upon** : had recourse to.

[4] **fond**: see *P. L.* III, 449; *S. A.* 228, 1682.

[5] "What boots it at one gate to make defence,
And at another to let in the foe,
Effeminately vanquished ?" *S. A.* 560–62.

think to regulate printing, thereby to rectify manners, we must regulate all recreations and pastimes, all that is delightful to man. No music must be heard, no song be set or sung, but what is grave and Doric.[1] There must be licensing dancers, that no gesture, motion, or deportment be taught our youth, but what by their allowance shall be thought honest; for such Plato was provided of.[2] It will ask more than the work of twenty licensers to examine all the lutes,[3] the violins, and the guitars in every house; they must not be suffered to prattle as they do, but must be licensed what they may say. And who shall silence all the airs and madrigals that whisper softness in chambers? The windows also, and the balconies must be thought on; these are shrewd[4] books, with dangerous frontispieces,[5] set to sale; who shall prohibit them, shall twenty licensers? The villages also must have their visitors[6]

[1] **Doric**: "Of the harmonies I know nothing, but I want to have one warlike (the Dorian), which will sound the word or note which a brave man utters in the hour of danger and stern resolve, or when his cause is failing and he is going to wounds or death or is overtaken by some other evil."—Plato, *Republic*, III, 399. See *P. L.* I, 550.

[2] There are many ancient musical compositions and dances which are excellent, and from these the government may freely select what is proper and suitable; and they shall choose judges of not less than fifty years of age, who shall make the selection . . . in order that they may regulate dancing, music, and all choral strains." — Plato, *Laws*, VII, 802.

[3] **lutes**: see *P. L.* V, 151; *P.* 28. See Aristotle's interesting discussion of the place of music in education, and of what he would license; *Politics*, VIII. See also p. 26, n. 3.

[4] **shrewd**: evil, mischievous. "When she 's angry, she is keen and shrewd!"—*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III, ii, 323.

[5] **frontispieces**: see *P. L.* III, 506. From med. L. *frontispicium* = looking at the forehead.

[6] **visitors**: this was an odious word in England, and had been so for ten years, because of Laud's Metropolitan Visitation.

to inquire what lectures [1] the bagpipe [2] and the rebeck [3] reads even to the ballatry,[4] and the gamut [5] of every municipal fiddler, for these are the countryman's Arcadias,[6] and his Monte Mayors.[7]

"For three years, beginning with 1634, Sir Nathaniel Brent, Laud's Vicar-General, went through the length and breadth of England south of the Trent, calling the clergy and the Churchwardens to account, correcting disorders, and, at the worst, ordering the prosecution of the offenders in the Court of High Commission." The same work was, in 1636, undertaken in the Universities. "Laud's triumph was the allowance of his claim to include the Universities in this visitation" (Gardiner's *History of England*, VIII, 108 and 147). When the Parliament came into power Cambridge suffered another *visitation*, and this was still going on at the time Milton was writing. "The Earl [of Manchester], going to Cambridge in person in February, 1643–44, . . . had been engaged in the work through the months of March and April, summoning refractory Heads of Colleges and Fellows before him, examining complaints against them, and putting them in most cases to the test of the Covenant. The result, when complete (which was not till 1645), was the ejection, on one ground or another, of about one half of the *Fellows* of the various Colleges of Cambridge collectively, and of eleven out of the sixteen *Heads of Houses*." — Masson, III, 92.

[1] **lectures**: discourses of the nature of sermons, usually delivered not at the regular time of church service.

[2] "**the bagpipe**, now happily almost confined to the North parts of this island, once pervaded the South also." — Hales.

[3] **rebeck**: a kind of violin with two strings, "probably the oldest stringed instrument." — Riemann, *Dict. of Music*. See *L'A*. 94.

[4] **ballatry**: ballad poetry.

[5] **gamut**: spelled in the orig. ed. gammuth = gamma + ut; this first word was in the Middle Ages the symbol of the first letter of the musical scale; the second was the syllable used as the name of this letter in the scale. Here the meaning is: the full range of notes the fiddler can command.

[6] Sidney's *Arcadia*, very popular in the seventeenth century, was first published in 1590. What is the story, and what is the appropriateness of citing it here?

[7] **Monte Mayors**: Jorge de Montemayor (1520?–1561)

Next, what more national corruption, for which England hears ill[1] abroad, than household gluttony?[2] Who shall be the rectors of our daily rioting? And what shall be done to inhibit the multitudes that frequent those houses where drunkenness is sold and harbored?[3] Our garments also should be referred to the licensing of some more sober workmasters, to see them cut into a less wanton garb.[4] Who shall regulate all the mixed conversation[5] of our youth, male and female together, as is the fashion of this country? Who shall still appoint what shall be discoursed, what presumed, and no further? Lastly, who shall forbid and separate all idle resort,[6] all evil company? These things will be, and must be; but how they shall be least hurtful, how least enticing, herein consists the grave and governing wisdom of a state.

To sequester out of the world into Atlantic[7] and

wrote *Diana Enamorada,* a Spanish prose pastoral, which spread to the other countries of Europe, and began the popularity of that form of romance.

[1] **hears ill**: is spoken ill of. This is a Greek idiom κακῶς ἀκούειν; see *F. Q.* I, v, 23.

[2] **gluttony? . . . rioting**: "Intemperance had, in the reign of James I, reached such a point that men of Elizabeth's Court, where there had been indecorum enough, were shocked to see the ladies and gentlemen of James I's Court rolling in a state of intoxication. The secretary of the Venetian ambassador observes that after a royal entertainment, such a rush was made for the supper-table that it was upset and all the food was scattered." — Traill, *Social England,* IV, 161. See what Hamlet says of Denmark in *Hamlet,* I, iv, 14–22, which applied also to England. See *P. R.* IV, 114; *Comus,* 776.

[3] **harbored**: see *P. R.* I, 307; *S. A.* 459.

[4] **garb**: manner, fashion. See *Lear,* II, ii, 103.

[5] **conversation**: see p. 48, n. 1.

[6] **resort**: the people frequenting a place. Cf. *Comus,* 379.

[7] Bacon's *New Atlantis,* in which he makes the fabled island of Plato's *Timæus* (21–26) the seat of an ideal commonwealth.

Utopian[1] polities,[2] which never can be drawn into use, will not mend our condition; but to ordain wisely as in this world of evil, in the midst whereof God hath placed us unavoidably. Nor is it Plato's licensing of books will do this, which necessarily pulls along with it so many other kinds of licensing, as will make us all both ridiculous and weary, and yet frustrate; but those unwritten, or at least unconstraining, laws of virtuous education, religious and civil nurture, which Plato there mentions as the bonds and ligaments of the commonwealth,[3] the pillars and the sustainers of every written statute; these they be which will bear chief sway in such matters as these, when all licensing will be easily eluded. Impunity and remissness, for certain, are the bane of a commonwealth; but here the great art lies, to discern in what the law is to bid restraint and punishment, and in what things persuasion only is to work. If every action which is good or evil in man at ripe years, were to be under pittance[4] and prescription and compulsion, what were virtue but a name, what praise could be then due to

[1] **Utopian**: Sir Thomas More describes in his *Utopia* (Land of Nowhere) another ideal commonwealth.

[2] **polities**: systems of government.

[3] "Also, I said, the State, if once started well, goes on with accumulating force like a wheel. For good nurture and education implant good constitutions, and these good constitutions having their roots in a good education improve more and more, and this improvement affects the breed in man as in other animals" (Plato, *Republic*, IV, 424). "We are not speaking of education in this sense of the word, but of that other education in virtue from youth upwards, which makes a man eagerly pursue the ideal perfection of citizenship, and teaches him how rightly to rule and how to obey."—Plato, *Laws*, I, 643.

[4] **pittance**: a small portion allowed.

well-doing, what gramercy [1] to be sober, just, or continent?

Many there be that complain of divine Providence for suffering Adam to transgress. Foolish tongues! when God gave him reason, he gave him freedom to choose, for reason is but choosing; [2] he had been else a mere artificial [3] Adam, such an Adam as he is in the motions. [4] We ourselves esteem not of that obedience, or love, or gift, which is of force; God, therefore, left him free, set before him a provoking [5] object, ever almost in his eyes; herein consisted his merit, herein the right of his reward, the praise of his abstinence. Wherefore did he create passions within us, pleasures round about us, but that these rightly tempered are

[1] **gramercy**: thanks; originally *grant merci*, may God reward you greatly.

[2] **reason is but choosing**: "I made him just and right, Sufficient to have stood though free to fall,"; see *P. L.* III, 98–108, especially "When Will and Reason (Reason also is choice)"; also *P. L.* VII, 506–10; IX, 351–53; XII, 82–90.

[3] **artificial**: contrived with art or skill.

[4] **motions**: puppet shows. "O excellent motion! O exceeding puppet!" *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II, i, 103. Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes of the English People*, 244, quotes a handbill from the Harleian MSS. "At Crawley's Booth, over against the Crown Tavern in Smithfield, during the time of Bartholomew Fair, will be presented a little opera, called the Old Creation of the World, yet newly revived. . . . The last scene does present Noah and his family coming out of the Ark, with all the beasts two and two, and all the fowls of the air seen in a prospect sitting upon trees, likewise over the ark is seen the Sun rising in a most glorious manner: morever, a multitude of Angels will be seen. . . . Likewise Machines descend from above . . . with Dives rising out of Hell, and Lazarus seen in Abraham's bosom, besides several figures dancing jiggs, sarabands, and country dances, to the admiration of the spectators."

[5] **provoking**: provocative, inciting. For the *provoking object*, see *P. L.* IV, 218–222; IX, 659–663.

the very ingredients of virtue? They are not skilful considerers of human things, who imagine to remove sin by removing the matter of sin; for, besides that it is a huge heap increasing under the very act of diminishing, though some part of it may for a time be withdrawn from some persons, it cannot from all, in such a universal thing as books are; and when this is done, yet the sin remains entire. Though ye take from a covetous man all his treasure, he has yet one jewel left, ye cannot bereave him of his covetousness. Banish all objects of lust, shut up all youth into the severest discipline that can be exercised in any hermitage, ye cannot make them chaste, that came not thither so: such great care and wisdom is required to the right managing of this point.

Suppose we could expel sin by this means; look how much we thus expel of sin, so much we expel of virtue: for the matter of them both is the same; remove that, and ye remove them both alike. This justifies the high providence of God,[1] who, though he commands us temperance, justice, continence, yet pours out before us,[2] even to a profuseness, all desirable things, and gives us minds [3] that can wander beyond all limit and satiety. Why should we then affect a rigor contrary

[1] "I may assert Eternal Providence
And justify the ways of God to men."
P. L. I, 25–26.

"Just are the ways of God
And justifiable to men."
S. A. 293–94.

[2] See the same thought in *Comus*, 762–79.

[3] **minds**: "so let extend thy mind o'er all the world in knowledge," *P. R.* IV, 223–24; also *P. L.* I, 254; VIII, 188; IX, 603. Read Hamlet's speech (*Hamlet* II, ii, 315) beginning "What a piece of work is a man," and the chorus in Sophocles' *Antigone*, "Wonders are many, and none is more wonderful than man."

to the manner of God and of nature, by abridging or scanting those means, which books freely permitted are, both to the trial of virtue, and the exercise of truth?

It would be better done,[1] to learn that the law must needs be frivolous,[2] which goes to restrain things, uncertainly and yet equally working to good and to evil. And were I the chooser, a dram of well doing should be preferred before many times as much the forcible hindrance of evil doing. For God sure esteems the growth and completing of one virtuous person, more than the restraint of ten vicious. And albeit whatever thing we hear or see, sitting, walking, travelling, or conversing, may be fitly called our book,[3] and is of the same effect that writings are; yet grant the thing to be prohibited were only books, it appears that this order hitherto is far insufficient to the end which it intends. Do we not see, not once or oftener, but weekly that continued court-libel [4] against the Parliament and City, printed, as the wet sheets can witness, and dispersed among us, for all that licensing can do?

[1] **done**: "Were it not better done." —*Lyc.* 67.

[2] **frivolous**: of little importance or significance; see *Comus*, 445.

[3] **our book**:

> "And this our life exempt from public haunt
> Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones and good in every thing"
> *As You Like It*, II, i, 15-17.

[4] **court-libel**: a weekly newspaper called the *Mercurius Aulicus*. Sir John Birkenhead (1616-79) was amanuensis to Laud and fellow of All Souls College. During the time King Charles was at Oxford, Birkenhead was appointed to write and publish weekly the *Mercurius*, containing the news of the court. It was a "virulent Royalist paper," and attacked the Parliament from every possible point of view. It continued, however, to appear regularly until 1645, and irregularly afterwards, but was finally silenced by the Parliament.

Yet this is the prime service a man would think, wherein this Order should give proof of itself.[1] If it were executed, you 'll say. But certain, if execution be remiss or blindfold now, and in this particular, what will it be hereafter and in other books?

If then the Order shall not be vain and frustrate, behold a new labor, Lords and Commons; ye must repeal and proscribe all scandalous and unlicensed books already printed and divulged;[2] after ye have drawn them up into a list, that all may know which are condemned, and which not; and ordain that no foreign books be delivered out of custody, till they have been read over. This office will require the whole time of not a few overseers, and those no vulgar[3] men. There be also books which are partly useful and excellent, partly culpable and pernicious; this work will ask as many more officials,[4] to make expurgations and expunctions, that the commonwealth of learning be not damnified.[5] In fine, when the multitude of books increase upon their hands, ye must be fain to catalogue

[1] That is, in silencing this worst of all libels.

[2] **divulged**: made publicly known. "When God . . . marks the just man, and divulges him through Heaven."—*P. R.* III, 60–62. "Though fame divulge him father of five sons."—*S. A.* 1248.

[3] **vulgar**: common, ordinary. Cf. *P. L.* III, 577.

[4] **officials**: a hated word in Milton's time. "An Official was the name of the Officer in the Ecclesiastical Courts to whom the Bishops deputed the cognizance of spiritual offenses. Laud had let them loose over the country" (Holt White). "To go about circled with a band of rooking officials, with cloak bags full of citations, and processes to be served by the corporality of griffonlike promotors, and apparators."—*P. W.* II, 375.

[5] **damnify**: to cause injury or loss to. "Very common in 17th. c."—*N. E. D.*

> "Then freshly up arose the doughty knight . . .
> As if late fight had nought him damnifyde."
>
> *F. Q.* I, xi, 52.

all those printers who are found frequently offending, and forbid the importation of their whole suspected typography. In a word, that this your Order may be exact, and not deficient, ye must reform it perfectly according to the model of Trent and Seville,[1] which I know ye abhor to do.

Yet, though ye should condescend [2] to this, which God forbid, the Order still would be but fruitless and defective to that end whereto ye meant it. If to prevent sects and schisms, who is so unread or so uncatechized in story,[3] that hath not heard of many sects refusing books as a hindrance, and preserving their doctrine unmixed for many ages, only by unwritten traditions? The Christian faith, for that was once a schism, is not unknown to have spread all over Asia, ere any Gospel or Epistle [4] was seen in writing. If the amendment of manners be aimed at, look into Italy and Spain, whether those places be one scruple the better, the honester, the wiser, the chaster, since all the inquisitional rigor that hath been executed upon books.

Another reason, whereby to make it plain that this Order will miss the end it seeks, consider by the quality which ought to be in every licenser. It cannot be denied but that he who is made judge to sit upon [5] the birth or death of books, whether they may be wafted [6] into this world or not, had need to be a man

[1] **Trent and Seville**; see p. 54, n. 1, and p. 43, n. 3.

[2] **condescend**: give one's consent, agree. "The king . . . as unwilling from time to time condescended to their several acts." —*P.W.* I, 342. See *S. A.* 1337.

[3] **story**: see p. 51, n. 5.

[4] The earliest of the Gospels is supposed to have been written down between 65 and 100 A.D.

[5] **to sit upon**: to decide whether or not they may be.

[6] **wafted**: be allowed to cross the river that separates life from that which is yet to be. See Plato, *Phædo,* 113.

above the common measure, both studious, learned, and judicious; there may be else no mean mistakes in the censure of what is passable or not; which is also no mean injury. If he be of such worth as behoves him, there cannot be a more tedious and unpleasing journey-work,[1] a greater loss of time levied upon his head,[2] than to be made the perpetual reader of unchosen books and pamphlets, ofttimes huge volumes. There is no book that is acceptable unless at certain seasons; but to be enjoined the reading of that at all times, and in a hand[3] scarce legible, whereof three pages would not down at any time in the fairest print, is an imposition which I cannot believe how he that values time and his own studies, or is but of a sensible nostril,[4] should be able to endure.

In this one thing I crave leave of the present licensers to be pardoned for so thinking; who doubtless took this office up, looking on it through their obedience to the Parliament, whose command perhaps made all things seem easy and unlaborious to them; but that this short trial hath wearied them out already, their own expressions and excuses to them who make

[1] **journey-work**: the work of a journeyman, a mechanic who works by the day for another person.

[2] That is, as a poll-tax.

[3] **hand**: see Milton's handwriting in the *Facsimile of the Trinity College Manuscript*.

> "I once did hold it, as our statists do,
> A baseness to write fair and labour'd much
> How to forget that learning, but, sir, now
> It did me yeoman's service."
>
> *Hamlet*, v, ii, 33–37.

[4] **sensible**: sensitive. See *P. L.* II, 278. **nostril**: Hales quotes Cowper's *Task*, II, 256, —

> "Strew the deck
> With lavender, and sprinkle liquid sweets,
> That no rude savour maritime invade
> The nose of nice nobility."

so many journeys to solicit their license, are testimony enough. Seeing, therefore, those who now possess the employment, by all evident signs wish themselves well rid of it,[1] and that no man of worth, none that is not a plain unthrift of his own hours is ever likely to succeed them, except he mean to put himself to the salary of a press corrector, we may easily forsee what kind of licensers we are to expect hereafter, either ignorant, imperious, and remiss, or basely pecuniary. This is what I had to show, wherein this Order cannot conduce to that end, whereof it bears the intention.

I lastly proceed from the no good it can do, to the manifest hurt it causes, in being first the greatest discouragement and affront that can be offered to learning and to learned men.

It was the complaint[2] and lamentation of prelates, upon every least breath of a motion to remove pluralities,[3] and distribute more equally church revenues,

[1] There is one man on record as asking to be relieved of the office of licenser. Mabbott, Deputy Clerk of the House of Commons, seems to have grown so weary of his task that he first licensed anything that came to his hand, and then begged to be released. See Masson, III, 432, and IV, 87, 93. What did Milton himself do when called upon to act in this capacity? "An extremely curious fact in the history of Milton's Secretaryship, not hitherto known, is that through the whole of this year 1651 he acted as an official Licenser or Censor of the Press." He was associated with Marchamont Needham, as censor, licenser, and supervising editor of the newspaper called *Mercurius Politicus.* — Masson, IV, 324–25.

[2] **complaint**: "They and their seminaries shame not to profess, to petition, and never leave pealing our ears, that unless we fat them like boars, and cram them as they list with wealth, with deaneries and pluralities, with baronies and stately preferments, all learning and religion will go underfoot." — *P. W.* II, 504.

[3] **pluralities**: "I have thus at large examined the usual pretences of hirelings, coloured over most commonly with the

that then all learning would be for ever dashed [1] and discouraged. But as for that opinion, I never found cause to think that the tenth part of learning stood or fell with the clergy; nor could I ever but hold it for a sordid and unworthy speech of any churchman who had a competency left him. If, therefore, ye be loth to dishearten heartily and discontent,[2] not the mercenary crew of false pretenders to learning, but the free and ingenuous sort of such as evidently were born to study, and love learning for itself, not for lucre, or any other end, but the service of God and of truth, and perhaps that lasting fame and perpetuity of praise which God and good men have consented shall be the reward of those whose published labors advance the good of mankind; then know, that so far [3] to distrust the judgment and the honesty of one who hath but a common repute in learning, and never yet offended, as not to count him fit to print his mind, without a tutor and examiner, lest he should drop a schism, or something of corruption, is the greatest displeasure and indignity to a free and knowing spirit that can be put upon him.

What advantage is it to be a man over it is to be a

cause of learning and universities; as if with divines learning stood and fell. . . . Neither speak I this in contempt of learning, or the ministry, but hating the common cheats of both . . . their false opinions, their pharisaical leaven, their avarice, and closely their ambition, their pluralities, their nonresidences, their odious fees . . . their legal and popish arguments for tithes" (*P. W.* III, 38). "The widowed whore Plurality" (*F. of C.* 3).

[1] **dashed**: "to perplex and dash maturest counsels," *P. L.* II, 114–15; "to dash their pride," *P. L.* X, 577.

[2] **discontent**: "So fearful I am of discontenting my wife." —Pepys, *Diary*, March 14, 1669.

[3] Note the omission of *as* here and its inclusion in the next phrase. The meaning is: to go so far as to distrust . . . so far as not to count . . . is the greatest displeasure.

boy at school, if we have only escaped the ferula[1] to come under the fescue[2] of an Imprimatur; if serious and elaborate writings, as if they were no more than the theme of a grammar-lad under his pedagogue, must not be uttered without the cursory eyes of a temporizing and extemporizing licenser? He who is not trusted with his own actions, his drift[3] not being known to be evil, and standing to[4] the hazard of law and penalty, has no great argument to think himself reputed, in the commonwealth wherein he was born, for other than a fool or a foreigner. When a man writes to the world, he summons up all his reason and deliberation to assist him; he searches, meditates, is industrious, and likely consults and confers with his judicious friends; after all which done he takes himself to be informed in what he writes, as well as any that writ before him; if in this the most consummate act of his fidelity and ripeness, no years, no industry, no former proof of his abilities can bring him to that state of maturity, as not to be still mistrusted and sus-

[1] The **ferula** is the giant fennel, in the stock of which Prometheus brought fire from heaven. In Roman times it was used as a cane, and hence the word came to be applied to the rod for chastising boys and slaves. "Mr. Skeat sends me a sketch of the thing from an old seal in his possession. It expanded at the end — the end designed for the victim — into a flat round; that is, it was in shape like a battledoor with the handle lengthened and the bat diminished, and so well adapted for effect on the palm of the hand, which was the part of application." — Hales.

[2] The **fescue** (L. festuca) meant a small piece of straw or a twig (the *mote* of Matt. VII, 3), and later, derived from this, the stick or pointer used in pointing out the letters to children who were learning to read.

[3] **drift**: see *P. R.* III, 4; *Sonnet* XVII, 6.

[4] **standing to**: taking the chance of, maintaining one's ground in. "Troilus will stand to the proof, if you'll prove it so." — *Troilus and Cressida*, I, ii, 142–43.

pected, unless he carry all his considerate[1] diligence, all his midnight watchings, and expense of Palladian oil,[2] to the hasty view of an unleisured licenser, perhaps much his younger, perhaps far his inferior in judgment, perhaps one who never knew the labor of book-writing; and if he be not repulsed, or slighted, must appear in print like a puny[3] with his guardian, and his censor's hand on the back of his title to be his bail and surety, that he is no idiot, or seducer; it cannot be but a dishonor and derogation to the author, to the book, to the privilege and dignity of learning.

And what if the author shall be one so copious of fancy, as to have many things well worth the adding, come into his mind after licensing, while the book is yet under the press,[4] which not seldom happens to the best and diligentest writers; and that perhaps a dozen times in one book. The printer dares[5] not go

[1] **considerate**: careful, deliberate.

> "Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
> Waiting revenge."
>
> *P. L.* I, 603-04.

[2] **Palladian oil**: pertaining to Pallas, the goddess of wisdom, to whom the olive was sacred. She taught mortals the process of extracting this oil. Milton's thought is: the oil by which men have studied and written and given proof of their abilities is a gift of the goddess of wisdom. Cf. *Il P.* 85–88.

[3] **puny**: a minor. OF. puisne = post natus. "How the puny law can be brought under the wardship and control of lust and will," *P. W.* II, 391.

[4] **under the press**: note the seventeenth century idiom.

[5] **dares**: this word was without the *s* in Old English. The two forms *dare* and *dares* were used indiscriminately in the seventeenth century; Abbott, *Shakespearian Grammar*, suggests that euphony may have determined the choice, and cites the following:

> "Here boldly spread thy hands; no venom'd weed
> Dares blister them; no slimy snail dare creep."
>
> *Faithful Shepherdess*, III. i, 255-56.

Milton, in his poetry consistently uses *dares* in this construction; see *P. R.* III, 57; *Comus*, 780; A. 23.

beyond his licensed copy; so often then must the author trudge to his leave-giver, that those his new insertions may be viewed; and many a jaunt [1] will be made, ere that licenser, for it must be the same man, can either be found, or found at leisure; meanwhile, either the press must stand still, which is no small damage, or the author lose his accuratest [2] thoughts, and send the book forth worse than he had made it, which to a diligent writer is the greatest melancholy [3] and vexation that can befall.

And how can a man teach with authority, which is the life of teaching, how can he be a doctor in his book as he ought to be, or else had better be silent, whenas [4] all he teaches, all he delivers, is but under the tuition, under the correction of his patriarchal [5] licenser to blot or alter what precisely accords not with the hide-bound humor which he calls his judgment? When every acute reader upon the first sight of a pedantic [6] license, will be ready with these like words to ding [7] the book a quoit's distance from him;

[1] **jaunt**: allied to *jaunce*, and meaning a fatiguing journey. See *P. R.* IV, 402, and *Romeo and Juliet*, II, v, 26, 53.

[2] **accuratest**: most carefully considered.

[3] **melancholy**: mortification, humiliation. What is the use of *melancholy* in *Il Penseroso?*

[4] **whenas**: cf. *P. L.* IX, 192; *Time*, 9.

[5] **patriarchal**: probably referring to Laud who was accused of desiring to be Patriarch of the English Church. "They both (Wolsey and Laud) favored the See of Rome and respected his holinesse in it; the Cardinal did professe it publickly, the Arch-bishop did professe it privately. The Cardinal's ambition was to be Popo; the Arch-bishop strove to be Patriarch." Quoted by Holt White from *Somer's Tracts*, IV, 434.

[6] **pedantic**: like that of a pedant or schoolmaster.

[7] **ding**: not an English word. It is probably from the Norse; the Ice. *Dengja* = to hammer; hence to beat, and then, as here, to throw.

"I hate a pupil teacher, I endure not an instructor[1] that comes to me under the wardship of an overseeing fist.[2] I know nothing of the licenser, but that I have his own hand[2] here for his arrogance; who shall warrant me his judgment?"

"The State, sir," replies the stationer,[3] but has a quick return: "The State shall be my governors, but not my critics; they may be mistaken in the choice of a licenser, as easily as this licenser may be mistaken in an author; this[4] is some common stuff"; and he might add from Sir Francis Bacon,[5] "That such authorized books are but the language of the times." For though a licenser should happen to be judicious more than ordinary, which will be a great jeopardy of the next succession,[6] yet his very office, and his commission enjoins him to let pass nothing but what is vulgarly[7] received already.

Nay, which is more lamentable, if the work of any deceased author, though never so famous in his lifetime, and even to this day, come to their hands for licence to be printed, or reprinted; if there be found in his book one sentence of a venturous[8] edge, uttered

[1] That is, the book that cannot come except as a ward under a guardian.

[2] **fist**: handwriting.

> "Loke you on your owne fist, and I will looke on this
> And let this man be judge whether I reade amiss."
>
> Udall's *Roister Doister*, III, v, 43-44.

[3] **stationer**: bookseller or publisher.

[4] **this** book before me.

[5] **Bacon**: see p. 105, n. 2.

[6] Perhaps the meaning is: it will be hard to find good licensers in succession, and the next one will seem worse because following one unusually good.

[7] **vulgarly**: commonly, by people in general.

[8] **venturous**: bold, daring. "With venturous arm," *P. L.* v, 64, also *P. L.* II, 205; *Comus*, 609.

in the height of zeal, and who knows whether it might not be the dictate of a divine spirit, yet not suiting with every low, decrepit[1] humor of their own, though it were Knox[2] himself, the reformer of a kingdom, that spake it, they will not pardon him their dash;[3] the sense of that great man shall to all posterity be lost, for the fearfulness, or the presumptuous rashness, of a perfunctory licenser. And to what an author[4] this violence hath been lately done, and in what book of greatest consequence to be faithfully published, I could now instance, but shall forbear till a more convenient season.

Yet if these things be not resented seriously and timely[5] by them who have the remedy in their power, but that such iron-moulds[6] as these shall have authority to gnaw out the choicest periods of exquisite books, and to commit such a treacherous fraud against the orphan remainders of worthiest men after death, the more sorrow will belong to that hapless race of men, whose misfortune it is to have understanding. Henceforth, let no man care to learn, or care to be more than worldly wise; for certainly in higher matters to be ignorant and slothful, to be a common steadfast

[1] **decrepit**: weak, shallow.

[2] **John Knox** (1505–72): "In the year 1564, John Knox, a most famous divine, and the reformer of Scotland to the presbyterian discipline, at a general assembly maintained openly, in a dispute against Lethington the secretary of state, that subjects might and ought to execute God's judgments upon their king." — *P. W.* II, 25.

[3] **dash**: a line of the pen drawn through for erasure.

[4] **an author**: it is uncertain to whom Milton here refers.

[5] **timely**: see *P. L.* III, 728; VII, 74; *Comus*, 970.

[6] **iron-mould**: a spot caused by iron-rust, but Milton seems to use it here for the *rust* itself.

dunce,[1] will be the only pleasant life, and only in request.

And as it is a particular disesteem of every knowing person alive, and most injurious to the written labors and monuments of the dead, so to me it seems an undervaluing and vilifying of the whole nation. I cannot set so light by all the invention,[2] the art, the wit, the grave and solid judgment which is in England, as that it [3] can be comprehended in any twenty capacities how good soever; much less that it should not pass except their superintendence be over it, except it be sifted and strained with their strainers; that it should be uncurrent without their manual stamp. Truth and understanding are not such wares as to be monopolised [4] and traded in by tickets [5] and statutes and standards. We must not think to make a staple commodity of all the knowledge in the land,

[1] **common steadfast dunce**: explain the meaning of this phrase, especially of *steadfast*. Cf. *Il P*. 32. What is the origin of the word *dunce?*

[2] **invention**: the power of creating with the mind, the creative faculty, imagination. See *P. L.* VII, 121; and "the odoriferous flowers of fancy, the jerks of invention," *Love's Labour 's Lost*, IV, ii, 128–29; "indeed my invention Comes from my pate as birdlime does from frize," *Othello*, II, i, 126–27.

[3] What is the antecedent of it?

[4] **monopolised**: the act abolishing monopolies — except in the case of new inventions — was passed in 1624. Elizabeth had granted so many monopolies that the system had become a great source of oppression and a cause of complaint.

"In truth, the world doth even groan under the burthen of these perpetual patents, which are become so frequent that whereas, at the King's coming in, there were complaints of some eight or nine monopolies then in being, they are now said to be multiplied by so many score." — Quoted by Gardiner, *History of England*, IV, 1.

[5] **tickets**: probably bills or accounts of goods taken out on credit.

to mark and license it like our broadcloth and our woolpacks. What is it but a servitude like that imposed by the Philistines,[1] not to be allowed the sharpening of our own axes and coulters,[2] but we must repair from all quarters to twenty licensing forges.

Had any one written and divulged erroneous things and scandalous to honest life, misusing and forfeiting the esteem [3] had of his reason among men; if, after conviction, this only censure were adjudged him, that he should never henceforth write, but what were first examined by an appointed officer, whose hand should be annexed to pass his credit for him, that now he might be safely read; it could not be apprehended less than a disgraceful punishment.

Whence, to include the whole nation, and those that never yet thus offended, under such a diffident [4] and suspectful prohibition, may plainly be understood what a disparagement it is. So much the more, whenas debtors and delinquents may walk abroad without a keeper, but unoffensive books must not stir forth without a visible jailor in their title. Nor is it to the common people less than a reproach; for if we be so jealous [5] over them, as that we dare not trust them with an English pamphlet, what do we but censure them for a giddy, vicious, and ungrounded people; in such a sick and weak state of faith and discretion, as to be able to take nothing down but through the pipe [6] of a licenser. That this is care or love of them, we cannot

[1] **Philistines**: see I Sam. XIII, 19–22.
[2] **coulter**: the iron point of the plow.
[3] **esteem**: estimation. See *P. L.* IX 328; *Il. P.* 17.
[4] **diffident**: distrustful. See *P. L.* VIII, 562; IX, 293.
[5] **jealous**: suspiciously vigilant. See *P. L.* X, 478; *L'A.* 6.
[6] **pipe**: tube for swallowing medicine.

pretend, whenas in those popish places where the laity are most hated and despised, the same strictness is used over them. Wisdom we cannot call it, because it stops but one breach of licence, nor that neither;[1] whenas those corruptions which it seeks to prevent, break in faster at other doors which cannot be shut.

And in conclusion, it reflects to the disrepute of our ministers also, of whose labors we should hope better, and of the proficiency which their flock reaps[2] by them, than that after all this light of the Gospel which is, and is to be, and all this continual preaching, they should be still frequented with such an unprincipled, unedified, and laic rabble,[3] as that the whiff of every new pamphlet should stagger them out of their catechism and Christian walking. This may have much reason to discourage the ministers, when such a low conceit[4] is had of all their exhortations, and the benefiting of their hearers, as that they are not thought fit to be turned loose to three sheets of paper without a licenser; that all the sermons, all the lectures preached, printed, vented[5] in such numbers, and such volumes, as have now well-nigh made all other books unsaleable, should not be armor enough against one single enchiridion,[6]

[1] **nor that neither**: note the double negative. In Old English two, three, and even four negatives were used to strengthen the negation. Compare the use in Greek. See *P. L.* I, 335; IV, 21, 22; VI, 348–49; XI, 396. See Abbott, *Shakespearian Grammar*, 295.

[2] **reaps**: see *P. L.* II, 339; III, 67; *S. A.* 966.

[3] **laic rabble**: the *profanum vulgus* of Horace, *Ode* III, i, 1. "To keep off the profane touch of the laics," *P. W.* II, 378.

[4] **conceit**: the primary meaning of the word is conception, idea; the most common sense in Shakespeare.

[5] **vented**: see *P. R.* I, 433; III, 391.

[6] **enchiridion**: from a Greek word meaning, held in the hand. The substantive meant both a dagger and a hand-book or manual; the latter was the common use in the seventeenth century.

without the castle of St. Angelo of an Imprimatur.[1]

And lest some should persuade ye, Lords and Commons, that these arguments of learned men's discouragement at this your Order are mere flourishes, and not real, I could recount what I have seen and heard in other countries, where this kind of inquisition tyrannises; when I have sat among their learned men,[2] for that honor I had, and been counted happy to be born in such a place of philosophic freedom, as they supposed England was, while themselves did nothing but bemoan the servile condition into which learning amongst them was brought; that this was it which had damped the glory of Italian wits; that nothing had been there written now these many years but flattery and fustian. There it was that I found and visited the famous Galileo,[3] grown old, a prisoner to

[1] **Imprimatur**: without the protection of a Papal license. The Castle of St. Angelo was built in 136 A.D. by Hadrian, and used from that time to 217 as the tomb of the Emperors. When the Goths besieged Rome it was turned into a fortress, and in later centuries was used by the party in power to overawe the people. From the time of Boniface IX (1389–1404) it was held by the Popes as a stronghold; in Milton's time it was the papal prison.

[2] See pp. lxiv, lxv.

[3] **Galileo** (1564–1642). In 1616 Galileo was called to Rome to defend his attempt to show the possible harmony between the Scriptures and the Copernican Theory of the universe. The church theologians called his assertion, that the sun is the centre of the universe and that the earth moves about it, absurd philosophy and expressly contrary to the Holy Scripture. The work of Copernicus was placed on the *Index*, and Galileo was told that he might accept this doctrine *ex hypothesi*, but that he must desist from discussing it in writing. For years he wrote nothing. In 1632, sure of his power and fame, he published his great work, *Dialogo dei due Massimi Sistemi del Mondo*. The result was that he was compelled to appear again in Rome, was convicted of

the Inquisition, for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the Franciscan and Dominican licensers thought. And though I knew that England then[1] was groaning loudest under the prelatical yoke, nevertheless I took it as a pledge of future happiness, that other nations were so persuaded of her liberty.

Yet was it beyond my hope that those worthies were then breathing in her air, who should be her leaders to such a deliverance, as shall never be forgotten by any revolution of time that this world hath to finish. When that was once begun, it was as little in my fear, that what words of complaint I heard among learned men of other parts uttered against the Inquisition, the same I should hear by as learned men at home uttered in time of Parliament[2] against an order of licensing; and that so generally, that when I had disclosed myself a companion of their discontent, I might say, if without envy,[3] that he whom an honest quæstorship had endeared to the Sicilians, was not more by them importuned against Verres,[4] than the favorable opinion which I had among many who honor ye, and are known and respected by ye, loaded me with entreaties and persuasions, that I would not despair to lay together that which just reason should bring into my mind, toward the removal of an undeserved thraldom upon learning.

That this is not, therefore, the disburdening of a

disobedience to the order of 1616, was made to recant, and lived for the rest of his life where Milton found him — *a prisoner to the Inquisition* — in the Villa Martellini near Florence.

[1] **then**: in 1638, referring of course to the domination of Laud.

[2] See pp. xiii and 66.

[3] **envy**: without bringing odium on myself (L. sine invidia).

[4] C. Cornelius **Verres**, notorious for his bad government in Sicily, against whom Cicero directed his seven famous orations.

particular fancy, but the common grievance of all those who had prepared their minds and studies above the vulgar pitch to advance [1] truth in others, and from others to entertain it, thus much may satisfy. And in their name I shall for neither friend nor foe conceal what the general murmur is; that if it come to inquisitioning again and licensing, and that we are so timorous of ourselves, and so suspicious of all men, as to fear each book, and the shaking of every leaf,[2] before we know what the contents are; if some who but of late were little better than silenced from preaching, shall come now to silence us from reading, except what they please, it cannot be guessed what is intended by some but a second tyranny over learning; and will soon put it out of controversy, that bishops and presbyters [3] are the same to us both name and thing.

That those evils of prelaty which before from five or six and twenty sees were distributively charged upon [4] the whole people, will now light wholly upon learning, is not obscure to us; whenas now the pastor of a small unlearned parish, on the sudden, shall be exalted archbishop over a large diocese of books, and yet not remove, but keep his other cure too, a mystical [5]

[1] **vulgar pitch to advance**: the common degree in order to advance.

[2] Again Milton's fondness for punning: "the plague of his time." — Hales. See *P. L.* VI, 558–67; 609–28.

[3] "The ordinary ministers of a particular church are Presbyters and Deacons. Presbyters are otherwise called Bishops," *P. W.* IV, 453; "through all which book (the Bible) can be nowhere, either by plain text or solid reasoning, found any difference between a bishop and a presbyter, save that they be two names to signify the same order," *P. W.* II, 421. See *F. of C.* 20.

[4] **charged upon**: laid as a burden upon.

[5] **mystical**: probably the meaning is, mysterious, unexplainable, unintelligible.

pluralist. He who but of late cried down the sole ordination of every novice bachelor of art, and denied sole jurisdiction over the simplest parishioner, shall now at home in his private chair assume both these over worthiest and excellentest books, and ablest authors that write them. This is not, ye covenants and protestations[1] that we have made! This is not to put down prelaty; this is but to chop[2] an episcopacy; this is but to translate the palace metropolitan[3] from one kind of dominion into another; this is but an old canonical sleight[4] of commuting our penance. To startle[5] thus betimes at a mere unlicensed pamphlet will after a while be[5] afraid of every conventicle,[6] and a

[1] **covenants and protestations**: The National Covenant was signed in Scotland in 1638, all good Scots binding themselves thereby to recover the purity and liberty of the Gospel. The Solemn League and Covenant, the treaty between the Scottish and English nations, was signed in 1643–44. "At the end of this month (Feb. 1644), on the fast day, the national covenant was taken, with a great solemnity." — *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, 216. In 1641 when it was believed that the King had a plan for bringing in an army to overawe the Parliament, the Commons drew up a Protestation, which began: "I, in the presence of Almighty God, promise, vow, and protest to maintain and defend, as far as lawfully I may, with my life, power, and estate, the true Reformed Protestant Religion, expressed in the doctrine of the Church of England, against all Popery and Popish innovations, etc." — Gardiner, *History of England*, IX, 364.

[2] **chop**: buy and sell; here the meaning is, to exchange one episcopacy for another. See this word in the *N. E. D.*

[3] **palace**: see p. 58, n. 1.

[4] A trick of exchanging one penance for another, allowed by the Canon Law.

[5] What is the construction of the verbs **startle** and **be**?

[6] **conventicle**: this word, originally meaning an assembly, a meeting, had come to signify in the seventeenth century: a religious meeting, prohibited by law, of Nonconformists, or Dissenters from the Church of England.

while after will make a conventicle of every Christian meeting.

But I am certain that a state governed by the rules of justice and fortitude, or a church built and founded upon the rock of faith and true knowledge, cannot be so pusillanimous. While things are yet not constituted[1] in religion, that freedom of writing should be restrained by a discipline imitated from the prelates, and learnt by them from the Inquisition, to shut us up all again into the breast of a licenser, must needs give cause of doubt and discouragement to all learned and religious men. Who cannot but discern the fineness[2] of this politic drift, and who are the contrivers: that while bishops were to be baited down,[3] then all the presses might be open; it[4] was the people's birthright and privilege in time of Parliament, it was the breaking forth of light?

But now, the bishops abrogated and voided out of the Church, as if our reformation sought no more, but to make room for others into their seats under another name, the episcopal arts begin to bud again;[5] the cruse of truth must run no more oil;[6] liberty of printing must be enthraled again under a prelatical commission of twenty,[7] the privilege of the people nul-

[1] **constituted**: established, settled.

[2] **fineness**: cunning, artifice.

[3] **baited down**: a figure taken from the sport of baiting bears and bulls with dogs. For a description of this pastime and its popularity see Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes of the English People*, 348–352.

[4] To what does **it** refer?

[5] **bud again**: see Num. XVII, 6–8.

[6] **run no more oil**: see 1 Kings, XVII, 9–15.

[7] See *Introduction*, p. xiv. "Any m n not of the number of the privileged twenty who ventured to print a book was 'to be set in the pillory and whipped through the City of London.'" — Gardiner, *History of England*, VIII, 234, —

lified; and, which is worse, the freedom of learning must groan again, and to her old fetters: all this the Parliament yet sitting. Although their own late arguments and defences against the prelates might remember them,[1] that this obstructing violence meets for the most part with an event utterly opposite to the end which it drives at; instead of suppressing sects and schisms, it raises them and invests them with a reputation: "The punishing of wits enhances their authority," saith the Viscount St. Albans; [2] "and a forbidden writing is thought to be a certain spark of truth that flies up in the faces of them who seek to tread it out."

This Order, therefore, may prove a nursing mother [3] to sects, but I shall easily show how it will be a stepdame [4] to Truth; and first by disenabling us to [5] the maintenance of what is known already.

Well knows he who uses [6] to consider, that our faith

[1] **remember them**: cause to remember, remind. See *Richard II*, I, iii, 269 and III, iv, 14, also the list of intransitive verbs used transitively in Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*, 202.

[2] This is from Bacon's tract, *An Advertisement touching the Controversies of the Church of England*, "And indeed we see it ever falleth out that the forbidden writing is always thought to be certain sparks of a truth that fly up in the faces of those that seek to choke it and tread it out; whereas a book authorized is thought to be but 'temporis voces' the language of the time." Quoted by Hales. See also *P. W.* III, 46.

[3] **nursing mother**: see Numbers, XI, 12; Isa. XLIX, 23. "And for the magistrate in person of a nursing father to make the church his mere ward." — *P. W.* III, 29.

[4] **stepdame**: see *P. L.* IV, 279; *Comus*, 830. Shakespeare gives the general conception of stepmothers in *Cymbeline*, I, i, 71.

[5] **to**: in regard to.

[6] **uses**: is accustomed.

and knowledge thrives by exercise, as well as our limbs and complexion.[1] Truth[2] is compared in Scripture to a streaming fountain; if her waters flow not in a perpetual progression, they sicken into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition. A man may be a heretic[3] in the truth; and if he believe things only because his pastor says so, or the Assembly so determines, without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresy.[3] There is not any burden that some would gladlier post off to another, than the charge and care of their religion. There be, who knows not that there be, of Protestants and professors[4]

[1] **complexion**: physical constitution of the body. In Shakespeare the word never has clearly this meaning. See *Measure for Measure*, III, i, 24. But in Bacon's *Adv. of Learning*, p. 12, "Physicians which . . . know neither the causes of deseases, nor the complexions of patients, nor peril of accidents, nor the true methods of cures." And p. 162, "our spirits are included in the caves of our own complexions and customs."

[2] **truth**: see Ps. LXXXV, 11.

[3] **heretic, heresy**; the Greek word *αἵρεσις* means *a choosing, a choice of thought or action*. "Do you think so? are you in that good heresy, I mean opinion?"—Ben Jonson's *Sad Shepherd*, I, 2. It also means *those who have chosen*, and hence *a sect*, by which word it is often translated in the authorized version of the New Testament; see Acts V, 17; XV, 5. "Another Greek apparition stands in our way, Heresy and Heretic; in like manner also railed at to the people as in a tongue unknown. They should first interpret to them that heresy, by what it signifies in the language, is no word of evil note, meaning only the choice or following of any opinion, good or bad, in religion, or any other learning" (*P. W.* II, 527). "He then, who to his best apprehension follows the scripture, though against any point of doctrine by the whole church received, is not the heretic; but he who follows the church against his conscience and persuasion grounded on the scripture."—*Ibid.* 528.

[4] **professors**: those who make open profession of religion; generally applied then to Protestants as opposed to Roman Catholics.

who live and die in as arrant an implicit faith,[1] as any lay Papist of Loreto.[2]

A wealthy man addicted to his pleasure and to his profits, finds religion to be a traffic so entangled, and of so many piddling accounts, that of all mysteries[3] he cannot skill[4] to keep a stock going upon that trade. What should he do? Fain he would have the name to be religious; fain he would bear up with his neighbors in that. What does he, therefore, but resolves to give over toiling, and to find himself out some factor, to whose care and credit he may commit the whole managing of his religious affairs; some Divine of note and estimation that must be. To him he adheres, re-

[1] **implicit faith**: the ecclesiastical Latin *fides implicita*, a faith not due to individual inquiry, but resting on the authority of another — especially that of the church — without doubt or inquiry. "The rule of true religion is the word of God only; and that their faith ought not to be an implicit faith, that is, to believe, though as the church believes, against or without express authority of scripture." "Sects may be in a true church as well as in a false, when men follow the doctrine too much for the teacher's sake, whom they think almost infallible; and this becomes, through infirmity, implicit faith." — *P. W.* II, 510, 511.

[2] In **Loreto**, a town of eastern Italy near Ancona, is one of the most frequented shrines of the Middle Ages, or of modern times. Here inside the cathedral church, is the *Casa Sante* or *Holy House*, the legend of which is: the house at Bethlehem in which Mary had been born and brought up, and where she had lived during the childhood of Christ, was converted by the apostles into a church. So it remained until the Turks, in 1291, threatened to destroy it. Then angels carried the house through the air and placed it in Dalmatia; in 1294 they again removed it to a wood near Recanati, and in 1295 to its present position. It has been recognized by successive Popes, and Innocent XII (1691–1700) instituted the *Feast of the Translation of the Holy House*, Dec. 10; this is still prescribed in the Spanish breviary.

[3] **mystery**: trade, occupation (L. ministerium). See *Measure for Measure*, IV, ii, 30–44; *Timon of Athens*, IV, i, 18.

[4] **skill**: have skill enough, manage.

signs the whole warehouse of his religion, with all the locks and keys into his custody; and indeed makes the very person of that man his religion; esteems his associating with him a sufficient evidence and commendatory of his own piety. So that a man may say his religion is now no more within himself, but is become a dividual[1] movable, and goes and comes near him, according as that good man[2] frequents the house. He entertains him, gives him gifts, feasts him, lodges him; his religion comes home at night, prays, is liberally supped, and sumptuously laid to sleep, rises, is saluted, and after the malmsey,[3] or some well-spiced brewage, and better breakfasted than he whose morning appetite would have gladly fed on green figs[4] between Bethany and Jerusalem, his religion walks abroad at eight, and leaves his kind entertainer in the shop trading all day without his religion.

Another sort there be, who, when they hear that all things shall be ordered, all things regulated and settled, nothing written but what passes through the custom-house of certain publicans[5] that have the tonnaging and poundaging[6] of all free-spoken truth, will

[1] **dividual**: that may be separated from him. See *P. L.* XII, 85.

[2] **good man**: the *Divine* mentioned above.

[3] **malmsey**: a strong, sweet wine from the neighborhood of Monemvasia in the Morea. See *Richard III*, I, iv, 161.

[4] **figs**: see Matt. XXI, 18, 19; Mark, XI, 12, 13.

[5] **publicans**: collectors of taxes.

[6] **tonnaging and poundaging**: "Ever since the days of Henry VI. the duties on exports and imports known under the name of tonnage and poundage had been granted by Parliament for the lifetime of each successive sovereign in the first session of his reign."—Gardiner, *History of England*, v, 364. Charles sought to levy these taxes without the consent of Parliament, and the whole question was hotly debated in the Commons. Finally "On the 22nd (1641) the King gave his assent to a Tonnage and

straight give themselves up into your hands, make 'em [1] and cut 'em out what religion ye please; there be delights, there be recreations and jolly pastimes that will fetch [2] the day about from sun to sun, and rock the tedious year as in a delightful dream. What [3] need they torture their heads with that which others have taken so strictly, and so unalterably into their own purveying? These are the fruits which a dull ease and cessation of our knowledge will bring forth among the people. How goodly, and how to be wished, were such an obedient unanimity as this, what a fine conformity would it starch [4] us all into! Doubtless a staunch and solid piece of framework, as any January could freeze together.

Nor much better will be the consequence even among the clergy themselves; it is no new thing never heard of before, for a parochial minister, who has his reward, and is at his Hercules pillars [5] in

Poundage Bill, conveying those duties to him for a limited time — a time which was to expire as early as July 15. By this Bill Charles surrendered forever his claim to levy customs duties of any kind without a Parliamentary grant." — *Ibid.* IX, 400.

[1] **'em**: a reflex use of the pronoun common in Milton's century. See *P. L.* II, 73; IV, 327; VI, 663; *S. A.* 1753.

[2] **fetch . . . about**: strictly a nautical term. See *King John*, IV, ii, 24.

[3] **what** = for what, why: see *P. L.* II, 94, 329; *Comus*, 362; also *Cymbeline*, III, iv, 34.

[4] "Do they [the prelates] keep away schism? If to bring a dumb and chill stupidity of soul, an unactive blindness of mind, upon the people by their leaden doctrine, or no doctrine at all; if to persecute all knowing and zealous Christians by the violence of their courts, be to keep away schism, they keep schism away indeed." — *P. W.* II, 462.

[5] **Hercules pillars**: the rocks on either side of the Strait of Gibraltar, which were supposed by the ancients to have been set up by Hercules and to be the support of the western boundary

a warm benefice, to be easily inclinable, if he have nothing else that may rouse up his studies, to finish his circuit[1] in an English concordance and a topic folio,[2] the gatherings and savings of a sober graduateship,[3] a harmony[4] and a catena,[5] treading the constant round of certain common doctrinal heads, attended with their uses, motives, marks, and means; out of which, as out of an alphabet or sol-fa,[6] by forming and transforming, joining and disjoining variously a little bookcraft, and two hours' meditation, might furnish him unspeakably to[7] the performance of more than a weekly charge of sermoning; not to reckon up the infinite helps of in-

of the world. Hence arose the sense: the ultimate limit or goal, and from that, the meaning which the word bears here, the highest ambition or desire.

[1] **circuit**, etc.: the course of his studies by consulting a *concordance*. There were several such books before this date. The first was the concordance to the Vulgate Bible, made by Hugo de St. Caro about 1255; another was the Hebrew concordance of Rabbi Nathan, published at Venice in 1523, and a more extended edition of this in 1621. There was a Greek concordance of the New Testament by Erasmus Schmidt in 1638.

[2] **topic folio**: a common-place book. See that kept by Milton himself. Bacon says (*Adv. of Learning*, 164): "I am not ignorant of the prejudice imputed to the use of common-place books, as causing a retardation of reading, and some sloth or relaxation of memory. But because it is but a counterfeit thing in knowledges to be forward and pregnant, except a man be deep and full, I hold the entry of common-places to be a matter of great use and essence in studying, as that which assureth copie of invention, and contracteth judgment to a strength."

[3] **sober graduateship**: a sober life at the university.

[4] **harmony**: a work showing how the narratives of the four Gospels agree in presenting the facts of the life of Christ.

[5] **catena**: a series of extracts from the writings of the fathers, arranged in the form of a commentary on the Scriptures.

[6] **sol-fa**: scale or gamut. See p. 81, n. 5. [7] **to**: for.

terlinearies, breviaries, synopses, and other loitering gear.[1]

But as for the multitude of sermons ready printed and piled up, on every text that is not difficult, our London trading St. Thomas[2] in his vestry,[3] and add to boot St. Martin and St. Hugh, have not within their hallowed limits more vendible ware of all sorts ready made; so that penury he never need fear of pulpit provision, having where so plenteously to refresh his magazine. But if his rear and flanks be not impaled,[4] if his back door[5] be not secured by the rigid licenser, but that a bold book may now and then issue forth, and give the assault to some of his old collections in their trenches; it will concern him then to keep waking, to stand in watch, to set good guards and sentinels about his received opinions, to walk the round and counter-round with his fellow inspectors,

[1] **loitering gear**: idle stuff or nonsense. Compare Shakespeare's use in: *Merchant of Venice*, I, i, 110; *Romeo and Juliet*, V, i, 60.

[2] The sense of the passage is clear; you cannot buy more wares within the named limits than you can ready-made sermons. St. Thomas refers to the Mercers' Chapel in Cheapside, where the mercers had their shops; which chapel was, before Henry VIII, the College or Hospital of St. Thomas. Milton here uses the old name of the chapel. The neighborhood of St. Martin le Grand was the favorite place for the manufacturers of cheap articles, as beads and lace. St. Hugh is uncertain, as there never was a church in London of that name, but the word may refer to a quarter of the city occupied especially by shoemakers. See the discussion in Hales' *Additional Note*, p. 153.

[3] **vestry**: possibly meaning that which adjoins the church, and also with reference to the Latin *vestiarium*, a clothes-press or wardrobe.

[4] **impaled**: enclosed with stakes, fenced in. Cf. *P. L.* II, 647; VI, 553.

[5] **back door**: postern.

fearing lest any of his flock be seduced, who also then would be better instructed, better exercised and disciplined. And God fend[1] that the fear of this diligence, which must then be used, do not make us affect the laziness of a licensing church.

For if we be sure we are in the right, and do not hold the truth guiltily, which becomes not, if we ourselves condemn[2] not our own weak and frivolous teaching, and the people for an untaught and irreligious, gadding[3] rout, what can be more fair, than when a man judicious, learned, and of a conscience, for aught we know, as good as theirs that taught us what we know, shall not privily from house to house, which is more dangerous, but openly by writing, publish to the world what his opinion is, what his reasons, and wherefore that which is now thought cannot be sound? Christ urged it as wherewith to justify himself, that he preached in public;[4] yet writing is more public than preaching; and more easy to refutation, if need be, there being so many whose business and profession merely it is, to be the champions of truth; which if they neglect, what can be imputed but their sloth, or unability?

Thus much we are hindered and disinured[5] by this course of licensing toward the true knowledge of what we seem to know. For how much it hurts and hinders the licensers themselves in the calling of their ministry, more than any secular employment, if they will

[1] **fend**: defend.

[2] **condemn**: "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." See Rom. XIV, 22, 23.

[3] **gadding**: see *Lyc.* 40; for **rout** see the *common rout* of *S. A.* 674–78; also *S. A.* 443; *Ps.* III, 16.

[4] **in public**: see John, XVIII, 19–21.

[5] **disinured**: disaccustomed.

discharge that office as they ought, so that of necessity they must neglect either the one duty or the other, I insist not, because it is a particular,[1] but leave it to their own conscience, how they will decide it there.

There is yet behind of what I purposed to lay open, the incredible loss and detriment that this plot of licensing puts us to. More than if some enemy at sea should stop up all our havens, and ports, and creeks, it hinders and retards the importation of our richest merchandise, truth;[2] nay, it was first established and put in practice by Antichristian malice and mystery,[3] on set purpose to extinguish, if it were possible, the light of reformation, and to settle[4] falsehood; little differing from that policy wherewith the Turk upholds his Alcoran, by the prohibition of printing. 'T is not denied, but gladly confessed, we are to send our thanks and vows to Heaven, louder than most of nations, for that great measure of truth which we enjoy, especially in those main points between us and the Pope, with his appurtenances the prelates; but he who thinks we are to pitch our tent here, and have attained the utmost prospect of reformation,[5]

[1] **particular**: personal matter or concern. See *Henry VIII*, III, ii, 189; *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV, ix, 20.

[2] **truth**: in this essay under what other figures has he presented *truth?* See Matt. XIII, 45, 46; Prov. VIII, 10, 11.

[3] **mystery**: the meaning appears to be, underhand and evil practices. Cf. *P. R.* III, 249.

[4] **settle**: establish. "My afflicted powers to settle here on earth." *P. L.* IV, 939–40.

[5] "For upon the settling hereof mark what nourishing and cordial restorements to the state will follow, the ministers of the gospel attending only to the work of salvation, every one within his limited charge; besides the diffusive blessings of God upon all our actions, the king shall sit without an old disturber, a daily encroacher and intruder" (*P. W.* II, 408). Read the wonderful prayer at the end of *Of Reformation in England.*

that the mortal glass[1] wherein we contemplate can show us, till we come to beatific vision,[2] that man by this very opinion declares, that he is yet far short of truth.

Truth indeed came once into the world with her divine Master,[3] and was a perfect shape most glorious to look on; but when he ascended, and his apostles after him were laid asleep, then straight arose a wicked race of deceivers,[4] who, as that story goes of the Egyptian Typhon[5] with his conspirators, how they dealt with the good Osiris, took the virgin Truth, hewed her lovely form into a thousand pieces, and scattered them to the four winds. From that time ever since, the sad friends of Truth, such as durst appear, imitating the careful[6] search that Isis made for the mangled

[1] **glass**: mirror. "Now we see through a glass, darkly," I Cor. XIII, 12. But Milton is here probably thinking of the magic mirrors of romance. See Chaucer's *Squieres Tale*, 132–141; *Il Pen.* 113; and *Macbeth*, IV, i, 119.

[2] **beatific vision**: the beholding of God face to face. See *P. L.* III, 60–63.

[3] See *N. O.* 141–43.

[4] Milton expresses this same thought in *P. L.* XII, 485–536.

[5] **Typhon . . . Osiris**: the former was the god of Evil and the latter the god of Good. When Osiris returned from a journey round the earth, Typhon carried out the plot he had laid against him. He secretly had the measure of the body of Osiris taken; then he made a handsome chest, offering to present it to the person who could lie down in it. No one could do this except Osiris. When Osiris had lain down, Typhon and his conspirators closed the lid, fastened it securely, and threw the chest into the river. Isis, the sister and wife of Osiris, searched for and found the chest, and did it reverence. But once when she was away, Typhon came upon it; he tore the body in fourteen pieces and scattered them abroad. See the story in *On Isis and Osiris*, one of the *Moral Essays* of Plutarch.

[6] **careful**: full of care or anxiety. "Careful hours . . . have written strange defeatures in my face." — *Comedy of Errors*, v. i, 298–99.



body of Osiris, went up and down gathering up limb by limb still as they could find them. We have not yet found them all, Lords and Commons, nor ever shall do, till her Master's second coming;[1] he shall bring together every joint and member, and shall mould them into an immortal feature[2] of loveliness and perfection. Suffer not these licensing prohibitions to stand at every place of opportunity, forbidding and disturbing them that continue seeking,[3] that continue to do our obsequies[4] to the torn body of our martyred saint.

We boast our light; but if we look not wisely on the sun itself, it smites us into darkness.[5] Who can discern those planets that are oft combust,[6] and those stars of brightest magnitude that rise and set with the sun, until the opposite motion of their orbs bring them to such a place in the firmament,[7] where they may be seen evening or morning. The light which we have gained, was given us, not to be ever staring on, but by it to discover onward things more remote from our knowledge. It is not the unfrocking[8] of a priest, the

[1] Matt. xxiv, 30; 2 Thess. i, 7.

[2] **feature**: shape, form (L. factura). See *P. L.* x, 279.

[3] **seeking**: possibly a reference to a sect known as the *Seekers*. See p. 116, n. 3. "The true force and propriety of *seeking* is not perceived by those who are unaware that there then existed a class of Religionists, not inconsiderable in numbers, whose imaginations, bewildered in the mass of theological controversy, were unable to settle in any mode of existing belief, and assumed, oddly enough, for a Christian congregation, a distinctive appellation of . . . *Seekers.*" — Holt White, 145.

[4] **obsequies**: acts of worship (L. obsequium).

[5] See *P. L.* iii, 380.

[6] **combust**: a planet is *combust* when within 8° 30′ of the body of the sun; its influence is then said to be burnt up or destroyed. Venus, Mercury, and Vulcan are those most oft combust.

[7] **firmament**: See *P. L.* iv, 604–8; vii, 348–49.

[8] **unfrocking**: the *frock* was a long gown with large open-

unmitring of a bishop, and the removing him from off the Presbyterian shoulders that will make us a happy nation; no, if other things as great in the Church, and in the rule of life both economical and political, be not looked into and reformed, we have looked so long upon the blaze that Zwinglius and Calvin [1] hath beaconed up [2] to us, that we are stark blind.

There be who perpetually complain of schisms and sects,[3] and make it such a calamity that any man dis-

sleeves, the characteristic dress of the monk. Sometimes the word was also used of the *cassock* of the Anglican clergyman.

[1] **Zwinglius** (1484–1531), the Swiss reformer. **Calvin** (1509–1654). Note plural subject and singular verb.

[2] **beaconed up**: kindled as a beacon.

[3] **sects**: in vol. III, pp. 136–159, Masson discusses the *Multiplication of Heresies* in 1644. "This matter, of the extraordinary multiplication of Sects and Heresies in England, had been in constant public discussion since the opening of the Long Parliament. It had figured constantly in messages and declarations of the King; who had first charged the fact of the sudden appearance and boldness of the Sects and Sectaries to the abrogation of his Kingly prerogative and Episcopal government by the Parliament, and had then attributed the origin of the Civil War to the lawless machinations of these same Sects and Sectaries." Among the recognized Sects were: Baptists or Anabaptists; Old Brownists; Antinomians; Familists; Millenaries or Chiliasts; Seekers; Divorcers; Anti-Sabbatarians, and Traskites; Soul-Sleepers or Moralists; Arians, Socinians, and other Anti-Trinitarians. To show the way in which the public mind was directed to this subject Masson quotes the titles of some books that were published in 1645. "*Heresiography; or, A Description of the Hereticks and Sectaries of these later times,*" by Ephraim Paget; "*A Fresh Discovery of some Prodigious new Wandering-Blazing-Stars and Firebrands, styling themselves New Lights, firing our Church and State into new Combustions,*" by William Prynne; "*Gangræna: or, a Catalogue and Discovery of many of the Errors, Heresies, Blasphemies, and Pernicious Practices of the Sectaries of this Time,*" by Thomas Edwards. See the caricatures in *Humour, Wit, and Satire of the Seventeenth Century,* 252.

sents from their maxims. 'T is their own pride and ignorance which causes the disturbing, who neither will hear with meekness, nor can convince, yet all must be suppressed which is not found in their syntagma.[1] They are the troublers, they are the dividers of unity, who neglect and permit not others to unite those dissevered pieces which are yet wanting to the body of Truth. To be still searching [2] what we know not, by what we know, still closing up truth to truth as we find it (for all her body is homogeneal and proportional),[3] this is the golden rule [4] in theology as well as in arithmetic, and makes up the best harmony in a church; not the forced and outward union of cold and neutral and inwardly divided minds.

Lords and Commons of England, consider what nation it is whereof ye are, and whereof ye are the governors; a nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit, acute to invent, subtle and sinewy to discourse,[5] not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to. Therefore the studies of learning in her deepest sciences have been so ancient, and so eminent among us, that writers of good antiquity, and ablest judgment have been persuaded that even the school of Pythagoras,[6] and the Persian wisdom, took beginning from

[1] **syntagma**: a collection or handbook.

[2] **searching**: investigating.

[3] All the parts are of the same kind, and each bears a distinct proportion to the whole.

[4] **golden rule**: the Rule of Three "on account of its great use and extensive application is often called the 'Golden Rule.'" Quoted by Hales.

[5] **to discourse**: to reason. See *P. L.* v, 488, and p. 77, n. 4.

[6] **Pythagoras**: "There is an old building at Cambridge traditionally known, from the sixteenth century at least, as 'Pythagoras school.' According to the opinion Milton here quotes, it

the old philosophy of this island. And that wise and civil Roman,[1] Julius Agricola, who governed once here for Cæsar, preferred the natural wits of Britain, before the labored studies of the French. Nor is it for nothing that the grave and frugal Transylvanian[2] sends out yearly from as far as the mountainous borders of Russia, and beyond the Hercynian wilderness,[3] not their youth, but their staid men, to learn our language and our theologic arts.

Yet that which is above all this,[4] the favor and the love of Heaven, we have great argument to think in a peculiar manner propitious and propending [5] towards us. Why else was this nation chosen before any other,

was, one may suppose, the place where that philosopher received not gave, instruction. It is the building known as Merton Hall." — Hales.

[1] **civil Roman**: for *civil* see p. 37, n 4. Julius Agricola was in Britain as consul from 78–85 A.D., not under Cæsar but under the Emperors Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian. Tacitus in his *Life of Agricola* says (21), "He was also careful to provide a liberal education for the sons of their chieftains, preferring the natural genius of the Britons to the attainments of the Gauls; and his attempts were attended with such success, that they who lately disdained to make use of the Roman language, were now ambitious to become eloquent."

[2] **Transylvania** was, from 1535–1688, a sovereign principality but at the latter date was conquered by Austria. It now forms the extreme southern part of Hungary. It was a Protestant country, and intercourse with England was not uncommon.

[3] **Hercynian wilderness**: a range of mountains in Germany, variously located by different authors from Aristotle to Pliny. According to Cæsar and Strabo, "the Hercynia Silva would be a general name for almost all the mountains of Southern and Central Germany, that is, from the sources of the Danube to Transylvania." — Smith, *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography*.

[4] See *S. A.* 1718–19.

[5] **propending**: being favorably inclined. See *S. A.* 455; *Troilus and Cressida*, II, ii, 133, 190.

that out of her as out of Sion should be proclaimed and sounded forth the first tidings and trumpet of reformation [1] to all Europe? And had it not been the obstinate perverseness of our prelates against the divine and admirable spirit of Wyclif, to suppress him as a schismatic and innovator, perhaps neither the Bohemian Huss and Jerome, no, nor the name of Luther, or of Calvin, had been ever known; the glory of reforming all our neighbors had been completely ours. But now, as our obdurate clergy have with violence demeaned [2] the matter, we are become hitherto the latest and backwardest scholars, of whom [3] God offered to have made us the teachers.

Now once again by all concurrence of signs, and by the general instinct of holy and devout men, as they daily and solemnly express their thoughts, God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in his Church, even to the reforming of reformation itself. What does he then but reveal himself to his servants, and, as his manner is, first to his Englishmen; I say, as his manner is, first to us, though we mark not the method of his counsels, and are unworthy. Behold now

[1] "The pleasing pursuit of these thoughts hath ofttimes led me into a serious question and debatement with myself, how it should come to pass that England (having had this grace and honour from God, to be the first that should set up a standard for the recovery of lost truth, and blow the first evangelic trumpet to the nations, holding up, as from a hill, the new lamp of saving light to all Christendom) should now be the last and most unsettled in the enjoyment of that peace, whereof she taught the way to others." — *P. W.* II, 368.

[2] **demeaned**: conducted, managed. Often reflexive; *Comedy of Errors*, IV, iii, 83. See *demeanour*, *P. L.* IV, 129; XI, 162.

[3] **whom**: those whom. Frequently so in Milton's poetry, *P. L.* I, 197; II, 249.

this vast city, a city of refuge, the mansion house[1] of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with his protection; the shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers waking, to fashion out the plates and instruments[2] of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth, than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching reformation; others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and convincement.

What could a man require more from a nation so pliant and so prone to seek after knowledge? What wants there to such a towardly and pregnant soil, but wise and faithful laborers, to make a knowing people, a nation of prophets, of sages, and of worthies? We reckon more than five months yet to harvest;[3] there need not be five weeks, had we but eyes to lift up; the fields are white already. Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making.[4] Under

[1] **mansion house**: dwelling-house. "The solidness of the earth is for the station and mansion of living creatures." Bacon, *Adv. of Learning*, 119. See *N. O.* 140; *Il P.* 92.

[2] **plates**: breast-plates. See *P. L.* VI, 368; *S. A.* 133. **instruments**: Cicero's *belli instrumentum et apparatus, Academica*, II, i, 3. See *P. L.* VI, 505; *P. R.* III, 388.

[3] **to harvest**: John IV, 35. Milton's hopefulness rests here, doubtless, on the establishment of Presbyterianism by Parliament, just then being effected; on Cromwell's move for greater toleration of "tender consciences"; on the help of the Scotch army; and on the criticism by Cromwell of the conduct of the war, which looked toward a reorganization of the army. See Masson, III, 166–183.

[4] "All what we affirm or what deny, and call our knowledge or opinion." — *P. L.* V, 108–109.

these fantastic terrors[1] of sect and schism, we wrong the earnest and zealous thirst after knowledge and understanding which God hath stirred up in this city. What some lament of,[2] we rather should rejoice at, should rather praise this pious forwardness among men, to reassume the ill-deputed care of their religion into their own hands again. A little generous prudence, a little forbearance of one another,[3] and some grain of charity might win all these diligences[4] to join and unite in one general and brotherly search after truth; could we but forego this prelatical tradition[5] of crowding free consciences[6] and Christian liberties into canons and precepts of men. I doubt not, if some great and worthy stranger should come among us, wise to discern the mould and temper of a people, and how to govern it, observing the high hopes and aims, the diligent alacrity of our extended[7] thoughts and reasonings in the pursuance of truth and freedom, but that he would cry out as Pyrrhus[8] did, admiring the

[1] **fantastic**: imaginary, unreal **terrors**! It was of this terrible Independency that the Presbyterians had begun to see signs in the Parliamentary army and throughout England. See p. 116, n. 3, and Milton's discussion of schisms in *P. W.* II, 511–12.

[2] **of**: about, concerning.

[3] "forbearing one another in love," Eph. IV, 2; also Col. III, 12–15.

[4] **diligences**: labors, exertions, efforts. See quotations in *N. E. D.*

[5] Ben Jonson in the *Alchemist*, III, ii, makes one of his characters say: "I hate traditions; I do not trust them — They are popish all." Cited by Holt White.

[6] **free consciences**: see *Sonnet*, XVI, 13; *F. of C.* 6.

[7] **extended**: see p. 85, n. 3.

[8] **Pyrrhus** (318?–272 B.C.) was king of Epirus. He defeated the Romans at Heracleia in 280. These words of Pyrrhus occur in *Epitome Rerum Romanarum*, by Lucius Annæus Florus, I, 18.

Roman docility and courage. "If such were my Epirots,[1] I would not despair[2] the greatest design that could be attempted to make a church or kingdom happy."

Yet these are the men cried out against for schismatics and sectaries; as if, while the temple[3] of the Lord was building,[4] some cutting, some squaring the marble, others hewing the cedars, there should be a sort[5] of irrational men who could not consider there must be many schisms and many dissections[6] made in the quarry and in the timber, ere the house of God can be built. And when every stone is laid artfully together, it cannot be united into a continuity, it can but be contiguous in this world; neither can every piece of the building be of one form; nay rather the perfection consists in this, that out of many moderate[7] varieties and brotherly dissimilitudes that are not vastly disproportional, arises the goodly and the graceful symmetry that commends the whole pile[8] and structure.

Let us, therefore, be more considerate builders, more wise in spiritual architecture, when great reformation

[1] **Epirots**: natives of Epirus.

[2] **despair**: "though I despair to attain," *P. R.* I, 485; "Peace is despaired," *P. L.* I, 660.

[3] **the temple**: see 2 Chron. II, 5–9.

[4] **was building**: compare the modern use. *Building* is here a verbal substantive, and the *a*, which originally governed it, is lost. See *N. E. D.* under *Build*, 7.

[5] **sort**: set, company. "And like a sort of Bees in clusters swarmed," *F. Q.* V, IV, 36; "Sent from a sort of tinkers to the king." — *II Henry VI*, III, ii, 277.

[6] Again a play on words.

[7] **moderate**: not greatly different. Note antithetic words in these phrases, and compare *L'A.* 140.

[8] See *P. R.* IV, 547.

is expected. For now the time seems come, wherein Moses, the great prophet, may sit in heaven rejoicing to see that memorable and glorious wish [1] of his fulfilled, when not only our seventy elders, but all the Lord's people, are become prophets. No marvel then though some men, and some good men too, perhaps, but young in goodness, as Joshua then was, envy them.[2] They fret, and out of their own weakness are in agony, lest those divisions and subdivisions will undo us. The adversary [3] again applauds, and waits the hour, when they have branched themselves out, saith he, small enough into parties and partitions, then will be our time. Fool! he sees not the firm root, out of which we all grow, though into branches; nor will beware until he see our small divided maniples [4] cutting through at every angle of his ill-united and unwieldy brigade.[5] And that we are to hope better of all these supposed sects and schisms, and that we shall not need that solicitude, honest perhaps, though over-timorous, of them that vex in this behalf, but shall laugh in the end at those malicious applauders of our differences, I have these reasons to persuade me.

[1] See Num. xi, 24–29. Verse 29 reads: "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them!"

[2] **envy them**: bear them ill will. "Gregorius Magnus, bishop of Rome, who was noted for the extreme envy he bare towards all heathen excellency." — Bacon, *Adv. of Learning*, 55.

[3] **adversary**: he undoubtedly refers to the Church of Rome, which, he believes, rejoiced at the growing divisions and sects in the Church of England.

[4] **maniples**: the word means *a handful* (L. manipulus). Among the ancient Romans the standard was a pole with a handful of hay or straw tied to it; then the word came to be applied to the whole standard, and finally, as here, to the company of soldiers following the same standard.

[5] **brigade**: see *P. L.* i, 675; ii, 532.

First, when a city [1] shall be as it were besieged and blocked about, her navigable river infested, inroads and incursions round, defiance [2] and battle oft rumored to be marching up even to her walls and suburb trenches; that then the people, or the greater part, more than at other times, wholly taken up with the study of highest and most important matters to be reformed, should be disputing, reasoning, reading, inventing, discoursing, even to a rarity and admiration,[3] things not before discoursed or written of,[4] argues at

[1] **when a city**: "In 1642 the King advanced suddenly from Colnbrook, took possession of Brentford, and appeared to intend an attack on London. The forces of the Parliament marched out to Turnham Green: and after the two armies had faced each other awhile, the King drew off to Reading. Next summer [1643], in view of this warning, the 'suburb trenches' were dug. . . . London was then [summer of 1643] altogether unfortified, no Works were raised, nor could they, if their Enemies (who were then masters of the field) had come upon them, have opposed any walls but such as old Sparta used for their Guard, the hearts of courageous Citizens. But at that time London began her large entrenchments; which encompassed not only the City, but the whole Suburbs on every side, containing about twelve miles in circuit. That great work was by many hands compleated in a short time, it being then a custome every day to go out by thousands to digge, all Professions Trades and Occupations taking their Turnes." — Jebb. See also Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War*, I, 52, 98.

[2] **defiance**: see *Richard II*, III, iii, 130, and 1 Sam. XVII, 10.

[3] **admiration**: "Reasoning to admiration," *P. L.* IX, 872; "know, and write, and teach to admiration," *P. R.* IV, 227–28.

[4] Perhaps Milton refers here to the meetings of the club for scientific experiment and discussion, which became in 1662 the Royal Society. "There were the most enthusiastic expectations of the effects to be produced by this *Invisible College*, as it was called, not only in advancing math matical and experimental science, but also in reforming the universities and the notions and methods of education." — Masson, VI, 392. See also Pepys, Jan. 22 and Feb. 21, 1666.

first a singular goodwill, contentedness and confidence in your prudent foresight, and safe government, Lords and Commons; and from thence derives itself[1] to a gallant bravery and well grounded contempt of their enemies, as if there were no small number of as great spirits among us, as his[2] was, who, when Rome was nigh besieged by Hannibal, being in the city, bought that piece of ground at no cheap rate whereon Hannibal himself encamped his own regiment.

Next, it is a lively and cheerful presage of our happy success and victory. For as in a body, when the blood is fresh,[3] the spirits pure and vigorous, not only to vital,[4] but to rational faculties, and those in the acutest and the pertest[5] operations of wit and subtlety, it argues in what good plight and constitution the body is; so when the cheerfulness of the people is so sprightly up,[6] as that it has, not only wherewith to guard well its own freedom and safety, but to spare, and to bestow upon the solidest and sublimest points of controversy and new invention,[7] it betokens us, not degenerated, nor drooping to a fatal decay, but casting off the old and wrinkled skin[8] of corruption to

[1] **derives itself**: flows, proceeds.

[2] **his**: see Livy, XXVI, 11.

[3] **the blood is fresh**: see *Comus*, 668–70.

[4] **vital**: see *P. L.* V, 482–85.

[5] **pertest**: lively. "Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth," *Midsummer Night's Dream*, I, i, 13. See also *Comus*, 118.

[6] **sprightly up**: up, roused, in activity. "The wonted-roar was up amidst the woods." — *Comus*, 549.

[7] **invention**: thought, design, scheme. See *P. L.* VII, 121, and *Lear*, I, ii, 20.

[8] **skin**: "as when into the light an adder, fed on poisonous herbs, whom the cold of winter kept swollen under ground, now all new, its slough cast off, and shining in youth, rolls along with breast erect its slimy length." — *Æneid*, II, 471–75.

outlive these pangs, and wax young again, entering the glorious ways of truth and prosperous virtue, destined to become great and honorable in these latter ages.

Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks;[1] methinks I see her as an eagle mewing[2] her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unscaling[3] her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise[4] of timorous and flocking[5] birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious[6] gabble[7] would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.

What should ye do then, should ye suppress all this flowery crop of knowledge and new light sprung up and yet springing daily in this city; should ye set an oligarchy of twenty engrossers[8] over it, to bring a

[1] **locks**: Judges, xvi, 13, 14, 19, 20; also *S. A.* 1143. Read the long figure in *P. W.* ii, 506, beginning "I cannot better liken the state and person of a king than to that mighty Nazarite Samson; who . . . grows up to a noble strength and perfection with those his illustrious and sunny locks, the laws, waving and curling about his godlike shoulders."

[2] **mewing**: the *N. E. D.* says, "The precise sense intended (by Milton) is difficult to determine: perhaps 'to renew by the process of moulting'; some would render 'exchanging her mighty youth for the still mightier strength of full age.'"

[3] **unscaling**: "And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales." — Acts, ix, 18.

[4] **noise**: company, concert. Cf. *N. O.* 97.

[5] **flocking**: fearful of being alone and hence going in flocks.

[6] **envious**: see p. 123, n. 2.

[7] **gabble**: the inarticulate noises of the birds. "Choughs' language, gabble enough, and good enough." *All's Well that Ends Well*, iv, i, 22. Cf. *P. L.* xii, 56.

[8] **engrossers**: those who buy in large quantities for the purpose of controlling trade — the modern *Trust*.

famine upon our minds again, when we shall know nothing but what is measured to us by their bushel? Believe it, Lords and Commons, they who counsel ye to such a suppressing, do as good as bid ye suppress yourselves; and I will soon show how.

If it be desired to know the immediate cause of all this free writing and free speaking, there cannot be assigned a truer than your own mild and free and humane government; it is the liberty, Lords and Commons, which your own valorous and happy counsels have purchased[1] us, liberty which is the nurse of all great wits; this is that which hath rarefied and enlightened our spirits like the influence[2] of heaven; this is that which hath enfranchised, enlarged, and lifted up our apprehensions degrees above themselves. Ye cannot make us now less capable, less knowing, less eagerly pursuing of the truth, unless ye first make yourselves, that made us so, less the lovers, less the founders of our true liberty. We can grow ignorant again, brutish, formal, and slavish, as ye found us; but you then must first become that which ye cannot be, oppressive, arbitrary, and tyrannous; as they were from whom ye have freed us. That our hearts are now more capacious, our thoughts more erected[3] to the search and expectation of greatest and exactest things, is the issue of your own virtue propagated in us; ye cannot suppress that unless ye reinforce an abrogated and merciless law, that fathers may despatch at will

[1] **purchased**: procured.

[2] **influence**: the astrologers taught that an occult power or virtue streamed from the stars, and acted upon the characters and destinies of men. "I find my zenith doth depend upon a most auspicious star," *Tempest*, I, ii, 181–82. Often in Milton's poetry: *P. L.* VIII, 513; X, 662.

[3] **erected**: see *P. L.* I, 679; *P. R.* III, 27.

their own children.[1] And who shall then stick closest to ye,[2] and excite others? not he who takes up arms for coat and conduct,[3] and his four nobles of Danegelt.[4] Although I dispraise not the defence of just immunities, yet love my peace better, if that were all.[5] Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.

What would be best advised, then, if it be found so hurtful and so unequal[6] to suppress opinions for the newness, or the unsuitableness to a customary acceptance, will not be my task to say; I only shall repeat what I have learned from one of your own honorable

[1] **law**: this was a Roman law, not formally repealed until 318 A.D. However, before the close of the Republic such an act was very unusual and was considered merciless.

[2] "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." — Prov. XVIII, 24.

[3] **coat and conduct**: the money levied for the clothing and the transportation of the army. "In many parts of the country the levy of coat-and-conduct money was equally unpopular. Sometimes it was directly denounced as illegal, and where this was not the case, payment was refused on the score of poverty." — Gardiner, *History of England*, IX, 140.

[4] **Danegelt**: "It can hardly be doubted that the original meaning of the word *Danegeld* must have been money paid to the Danes to buy them off, a practice of which I need not multiply instances during the reign of Æthelred, and which was at least looked on as early as the days of Eadred" (Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, II, 403). It was levied after the coming of the Norman kings as a land-tax. A **noble** was an English coin, current from the reign of Edward III, of the value of 6*s*. 8*d*.

[5] I am willing to fight for exemption from unjust taxation but I prefer peace. Masson (II, 472–87) discusses the possibility of Milton's having served in the army, and concludes that he took no part in the fighting.

[6] **unequal**: unjust, unfair (L. iniquum). "To punish me for what you make me do seems much unequal." — *Antony and Cleopatra*, II, v, 100–01.

number, a right noble and pious lord, who, had he not sacrificed his life and fortunes to the Church and Commonwealth, we had not now missed and bewailed a worthy and undoubted patron of this argument. Ye know him I am sure; yet I for honor's sake,[1] and may it be eternal to him, shall name him the Lord Brook.[2] He, writing of Episcopacy, and by the way treating of sects and schisms, left ye his vote,[3] or rather now the last words of his dying charge, which I know will ever be of dear and honored regard with ye, so full of meekness and breathing[4] charity, that next to his last testament,[5] who bequeathed love and peace to his disciples, I cannot call to mind where I have read or heard words more mild and peaceful. He there exhorts us to hear with patience and humility those, however they be miscalled, that desire to live purely, in such a use of God's ordinances, as the best guidance of their conscience gives them, and to tolerate them, though in some disconformity to ourselves. The book itself will tell us more at large, being published to the world, and dedicated to the Parliament by him who, both for his life and for his death, deserves that what advice he left be not laid by without perusal.

[1] **for honor's sake**: see *S. A*. 372; *Comus*, 864.

[2] **Lord Brooke**: Robert Greville, second Lord Brooke, was a staunch supporter of the Parliament, a general of the parliamentary forces in the Civil War, and greatly admired and beloved in England. He was killed in an attack on Lichfield Cathedral, March 2, 1643, where the royal forces had retired for defence. The book referred to is: *A discourse opening the nature of that Episcopacie which is exercised in England. Wherein, with all Humility, are represented some Considerations tending to the much desired Peace and long expected Reformation of this our Mother Church.*

[3] **vote**: earnest wish or desire (L. votum).

[4] **breathing**: see *P. L.* I, 554; III, 267.

[5] **testament**: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." — John, XIV, 27.

And now the time in special is,[1] by privilege to write and speak what may help to the further discussing of matters in agitation. The temple of Janus[2] with his two controversal faces might now not unsignificantly be set open. And though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter. Her[3] confuting is the best and surest suppressing. He who hears what praying there is for light and clearer knowledge to be sent down among us, would think of other matters to be constituted beyond the discipline of Geneva,[4] framed and fabriced[5] already to our hands.

Yet when the new light which we beg for shines in upon us, there be who envy and oppose, if it come not first in at their casements. What a collusion is this, whenas we are exhorted by the wise man to use diligence, to seek for wisdom as for hidden treasures[6] early and late, that another order shall enjoin us to know nothing but by statute? When a man hath been

[1] It is especially fitting at this time.

[2] Janus, the Roman god with the two faces. His gate or temple in the Forum, having two doors in opposite directions, was closed in time of peace and open in time of war. See Vergil's description of the opening of these gates, *Æneid*, VII, 601–628. Also *P. L.* XI, 129.

[3] Confutation or disproof by her; *her* is here the Old English genitive. See *P. L.* VIII, 480, and *Macbeth*, I, vii, 20.

[4] Other matters to be thought out beyond those which seem to the Presbyterians to be final; **discipline**: "the system by which the practice of a church, as distinguished from its doctrine, is regulated" (*N. E. D.*). Cf. Milton's title *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*.

[5] **fabriced**: fabricated.

[6] See Prov. VIII, 11; XVI, 16; Matt. XIII, 44–46.

laboring the hardest labor in the deep mines of knowledge, hath furnished out his findings in all their equipage,[1] drawn forth his reasons as it were a battle[2] ranged, scattered and defeated all objections in his way, calls out his adversary into the plain, offers him the advantage of wind and sun,[3] if he please; only that he may try the matter by dint of argument, for his opponents then to sculk, to lay ambushments, to keep a narrow bridge of licensing[4] where the challenger should pass, though it be valor enough in soldiership, is but weakness and cowardice in the wars of Truth. For who knows not that Truth is strong, next to the Almighty; she needs no policies, no stratagems, nor licensings to make her victorious; those are the shifts[5] and the defences that error uses against her power: give her but room, and do not bind her when she sleeps, for then she speaks not true, as the old Proteus[6]

[1] **equipage**: "war . . . in all her equipage." — *Sonnet*, XVII, 9.

[2] **battle**: army. See the same use in *P. L.* VI, 216.

[3] In the days of chivalry when the fighting was with lance and shield it was a great disadvantage to have the sun in the face. ". . . and the judges placed them fairly, each in his place, so that neither should have the sun in his eyes." — Southey, *Chronicle of the Cid* I, 10.

> "While to each knight their care assign'd
> Like vantage of the sun and wind."
>
> *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, V, 18.

[4] **bridge of licensing**: this is again a memory of the romances, in which one of the devices was the holding of a bridge by a single knight. Hales cites *F. Q.* V, ii, 4, which reads:

> "But in my way, a little here beyond
> A cursed cruell Sarazin doth wonne,
> That keepes a Bridges passage by strong hond,
> And many errant Knights hath there foredonne;
> That makes all men for feare that passage for to shonne."

[5] **shifts**: see *P. R.* IV, 308; *S. A.* 1116.

[6] **Proteus** was the sea-god who tended the flocks of Poseidon, and who had the power of assuming every possible

did, who spake oracles only when he was caught and bound, but then rather she turns herself into all shapes, except her own, and perhaps tunes her voice according to the time, as Micaiah did before Ahab,[1] until she be adjured into her own likeness.

Yet is it not impossible that she may have more shapes than one. What else is all that rank[2] of things indifferent,[3] wherein Truth may be on this side, or on the other, without being unlike herself? What but a vain shadow else is the abolition of those ordinances,[4] that hand-writing nailed to the cross; what great purchase[5] is this Christian liberty which Paul so often boasts of?[6] His doctrine is, that he who eats, or eats not, regards a day, or regards it not, may do either to the Lord.[7] How many other things might be tolerated in peace, and left to conscience, had we but charity, and were it not the chief stronghold of our hypocrisy to be ever judging one another. I fear yet this iron yoke of outward conformity hath left a slavish print upon our necks; the ghost of a linen decency[8] yet

shape to avoid the necessity of prophesying, but when finally caught and held by force, he would tell truly of the future. See the description of him in Vergil's *Georgics*, IV, 387 ff., and also Homer's *Odyssey*, IV, 385 ff.

[1] **before Ahab**: see 1 Kings, XXII, 1–28.

[2] **rank**: row, line. See *N. O.* 114; *Ar.* 99.

[3] **indifferent**: of neutral quality, neither good nor bad.

[4] See Eph. II, 15, 16; Col. II, 13, 14.

[5] **purchase**: something won. See p. 127, n. 1.

[6] "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." — Rom. VI, 18; also Gal. V, 1; I Pet. II, 16.

[7] See Rom. XIV, 5–8.

[8] "They (the prelates) hallowed it (the body), they fumed up, they sprinkled it, they bedecked it, not in robes of pure innocency, but of pure linen, with other deformed and fantastic dresses, in palls and mitres, gold, and gewgaws fetched from Aaron's old wardrobe, or the flamins vestry." And again: "They

haunts us. We stumble and are impatient at the least dividing of one visible congregation from another, though it be not in fundamentals; and through our forwardness to suppress, and our backwardness to recover, any enthralled piece of truth out of the gripe of custom,[1] we care not to keep truth separated from truth, which is the fiercest rent and disunion of all. We do not see that while we still affect by all means a rigid external formality, we may as soon fall again into a gross conforming stupidity, a stark and dead congealment of wood, and hay, and stubble[2] forced and frozen together, which is more to the sudden degenerating of a church than many subdichotomies[3] of petty schisms.

Not that I can think well of every light separation, or that all in a church is to be expected gold and silver and precious stones:[4] it is not possible for man to sever the wheat from the tares,[5] the good fish from the other fry; that must be the angels' ministry at the

knew not how to hide their slavish approach to God's behests . . . but by cloaking their servile crouching to all religious presentiments, sometimes lawful, sometimes idolatrous, under the name of humility, and terming the piebald frippery and ostentation of ceremonies, decency." — *P. W.* II, 365, 366.

[1] **custom**: "If it were seriously asked . . . who of all teachers and masters, that hath ever taught, hath drawn the most disciples after him, both in religion and in manners? it might be not untruly answered, custom . . . it happens for the most part that custom is silently received for the best instructor." *P. W.* III, 171.

[2] "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble." — 1 Cor. III, 12.

[3] **subdichotomies**: subdivisions.

[4] **precious stones**: see Rev. XVIII, 12.

[5] "But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them." Read Matt. XIII, 24–30; and for the **Angels' ministry** see verses 37–43.

end of mortal things. Yet if all cannot be of one mind, — as who looks they should be? — this doubtless is more wholesome, more prudent, and more Christian, that many be tolerated, rather than all compelled. I mean not tolerated popery [1] and open superstition, which, as it extirpates all religions and civil supremacies, so itself should be extirpate; provided first that all charitable and compassionate means be used to win and regain the weak and the mislead; that also which is impious [2] or evil absolutely, either against faith or manners,[3] no law can possibly permit, that intends not to unlaw itself; but those neighboring differences, or rather indifferences, are what I speak of, whether in some point of doctrine or of discipline, which though they may be many, yet need not interrupt the unity of spirit, if we could but find among us the bond of peace.[4]

In the meanwhile, if any one would write, and bring his helpful hand to the slow-moving [5] reforma-

[1] **tolerated popery**: Milton's scheme of religious toleration never included Catholicism. "Let us now inquire whether popery be tolerable or no. Popery is a double thing to deal with, and claims a twofold power, ecclesiastical and political, both usurped, and the one supporting the other." Then at the end of his argument he concludes: "Having shown thus, that popery, as being idolatrous, is not to be tolerated either in public or in private; it must be now thought how to remove it." — *P. W.* II, 513, 514.

[2] **impious**: lacking veneration for God or his authority. See *P. L.* I, 342; VI, 831.

[3] **manners**: conduct as it is moral or immoral. See Wordsworth's Sonnet on Milton.

[4] "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." — Eph. IV, 3.

[5] **slow-moving**: "We must not run, they say, into sudden extremes. This is a fallacious rule . . . and he that, flying from degenerate and traditional corruption, fears to shoot himself too far into the meeting embraces of a divinely warranted reforma-

tion which we labor under, if truth have spoken to him before others, or but seemed at least to speak, who hath so bejesuited[1] us that we should trouble that man with asking license to do so worthy a deed? And not consider this, that if it come to prohibiting, there is not aught more likely to be prohibited than truth itself; whose first appearance to our eyes bleared and dimmed with prejudice and custom, is more unsightly and unplausible than many errors, even as the person is[2] of many a great man slight and contemptible to see to.[3] And what do they tell us vainly of new opinions, when this very opinion of theirs, that none must be heard but whom they like, is the worst and newest opinion of all others; and is the chief cause why sects and schisms do so much abound, and true knowledge is kept at distance from us; besides yet a greater danger which is in it. For when God shakes a kingdom[4] with strong and healthful commotions to a general reforming, 't is not untrue that many sectaries

tion, had better not have run at all . . . certainly we ought to hie us from evil like a torrent, and rid ourselves of corrupt discipline, as we would shake fire out of our bosoms." "But let us not for fear of a scarecrow, or else through hatred to be reformed, stand hankering and politizing, when God with spread hands testifies to us, and points us out the way to our peace." — *P. W.* II, 410 and 415.

[1] **bejesuited**: for the use of this prefix, see the *N. E. D.* under *Be*, 7. See Milton's use in the poetry: "bedrop," *P. L.* X, 527; "bested," *Il P.* 3; "bestick," *P. L.* XII, 536.

[2] **the person of**: Paul says of himself "his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible" (2 Cor. X, 10). See Bacon's essay *On Deformity* in which he cites Socrates as of this class.

[3] **to see to**; to look on. See *Comus*, 620.

[4] **shakes a kingdom**: "And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." — Haggai, II, 7.

and false teachers are then busiest in seducing; but yet more true it is, that God then raises to his own work men of rare abilities, and more than common industry, not only to look back, and revise what hath been taught heretofore, but to gain further, and go on some new enlightened [1] steps in the discovery of truth.

For such is the order of God's enlightening his church, to dispense and deal out by degrees his beam,[2] so as our earthly eyes may best sustain it. Neither is God appointed and confined, where and out of what place these his chosen shall be first heard to speak; for he sees not as man sees, chooses not as man chooses, lest we should devote ourselves again to set places,[3] and assemblies, and outward callings of men;[4] planting our faith one while in the old Convocation house,[5] and another while in the Chapel [5] at Westminster; when all the faith and religion that shall be there canonized,[6] is not sufficient without plain con-

[1] **enlightened**: see *P. L.* XI, 115.

[2] **beam**:

> "Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first-born!
> Or of the Eternal coeternal beam."
>
> *P. L.* III, 1, 2.
>
> "O first-created beam, and thou great Word."
>
> *S. A.* 83.

[3] **set places**: "To teach thee that God attributes to place no sanctity." — *P. L.* XI, 836–37.

[4] **callings of men**: "They [the priests] have been in England to our souls a sad and doleful succession of illiterate and blind guides." — *P. W.* II, 411.

[5] The **Convocation**, the assembly of the clergy of the Church of England, met in the Chapter House of Westminster Cathedral. In June, 1643, the Parliament transferred to the *Assembly of Divines* of the Presbyterian Church, the powers formerly held by the *Convocation*, and assigned to it Henry VII's **Chapel** as a meeting place.

[6] **canonized**: admitted to the canon or body of ecclesiastical laws. "The work expected by the Parliament from the Assembly consisted of: (1) the compilation of a *Confession of Faith*, or *Arti-*

vincement and the charity of patient instruction, to supple the least bruise of conscience, to edify the meanest Christian who desires to walk in the Spirit,[1] and not in the letter of human trust, for all the number of voices that can be there made; no, though Harry VII himself there, with all his liege tombs[2] about him, should lend them voices from the dead, to swell their number.

And if the men be erroneous who appear to be the leading schismatics, what withholds us but our sloth, our self-will, and distrust in the right cause, that[3] we do not give them gentle meetings and gentle dismissions, that we debate not and examine the matter thoroughly with liberal and frequent audience; if not for their sakes, yet for our own? Seeing no man who hath tasted[4] learning, but will confess the many ways of profiting by those who, not contented with stale receipts, are able to manage, and set forth new positions to the

cles of Religion . . .; (2) the composition of a *Catechism* . . .; (3) the devising of a *Frame of Discipline or Church-government* . . .; and (4) the preparation of a *Directory of Worship*." — Masson, III, 171–172.

[1] **walk in the Spirit**: see 2 Cor. III, 6; Rom. II, 29.

[2] **his liege tombs**: The first grave in the new chapel was that of his wife, Elizabeth of York. Six years after this Henry VII was buried in this wonderful mausoleum he had reared for himself. There were later **about him** the tombs of his mother, Margaret Beaufort, of Queen Mary, of Queen Elizabeth, of Mary Queen of Scots whose body was brought here in 1612, of Prince Henry, of Anne of Denmark, and of King James I. See Stanley, *Memorials of Westminster*, 138–58.

[3] **that**: L. quin.

[4] **tasted**: a common figure in Elizabethan literature. See Shakespeare's use, "And of this book this learning mayst thou taste," *Sonnet*, LXXVII, 4; "Never to taste the pleasures of the world," *King John*, IV, iii, 68. Milton uses it, *P. R.* II, 131; *S. A.* 1091.

world. And were they but as the dust and cinders of our feet, so long as in that notion[1] they may serve to polish and brighten the armory of Truth, even for that respect they were not utterly to be cast away. But if they be of those whom God hath fitted for the special use of these times with eminent and ample gifts, and those perhaps neither among the priests, nor among the pharisees,[2] and we in the haste of a precipitant zeal shall make no distinction, but resolve to stop their mouths, because we fear they come with new and dangerous opinions, as we commonly forejudge them ere we understand them, no less than woe to us,[3] while thinking thus to defend the Gospel, we are found the persecutors.

There have been not a few since the beginning of this Parliament, both of the Presbytery and others, who by their unlicensed books, to the contempt of an Imprimatur, first broke that triple ice[4] clung[5] about our hearts, and taught the people to see day; I hope that none of those were the persuaders to renew upon us this bondage which they themselves have wrought so much good by contemning. But if neither the check that Moses gave to young Joshua,[6] nor the countermand which our Saviour gave to young John,[7] who was

[1] **notion**: character, function, rôle.

[2] **the priests . . . pharisees**: that is, neither among the prelates who administered the rights of the church nor among those skilled in the interpretation of the laws; both were learned but both were open to criticism, because of partizanship either for or against the existing customs.

[3] What is the grammatical construction of this phrase?

[4] **triple ice**: "Heart of oak and triple brass lay around the breast of him who first to the savage sea entrusted his frail bark." — Horace, *Odes*, I, 3.

[5] **clung**: probably a past participle. See *P. L.* x, 512.

[6] See p. 123, n. 1.

[7] See Luke, IX, 49, 50.

so ready to prohibit those whom he thought unlicensed, be not enough to admonish our elders[1] how unacceptable to God their testy mood of prohibiting is; if neither their own remembrance what evil hath abounded in the church by this let[2] of licensing, and what good they themselves have begun by transgressing it, be not enough, but that they will persuade, and execute the most Domician part of the Inquisition[3] over us, and are already with one foot in the stirrup so active at suppressing, it would be no unequal distribution, in the first place, to suppress the suppressors themselves; whom the change of their condition hath puffed up, more than their late experience of harder times hath made wise.

And as for regulating the press, let no man think to have the honor of advising ye better than yourselves have done in that order published next before this,[4] "that no book be printed, unless the printer's and the author's name, or at least the printer's be registered." Those which otherwise come forth, if they be found mischievous and libellous, the fire and the executioner[5] will be the timeliest and the most effectual

[1] **elders**: what is the derivation of the word Presbyterian?

[2] **let**: from the old English verb *lettan*, to hinder. "I 'll make a ghost of him that lets me!" *Hamlet* I, iv, 85; "what lets it but he would be here?" *Comedy of Errors* II, i, 105. See also Rom. I, 13; 2 Thess. 2, 7.

[3] **Inquisition**: see p. 43, n. 3.

[4] **that order published next before this**: there was an order of the Commons Jan. 29, 1642, another March 9, 1643, and a third, the famous order, June 14, 1643. Milton seems to regard the second and third as one and the same, and in fact the third was merely a fuller statement of the second. The one from which he quotes was that of Jan. 29, 1642.

[5] This was the common course of procedure. The **executioner** was the hangman who *executed* the order of the Commons, whether

remedy that man's prevention can use. For this authentic[1] Spanish policy of licensing books, if I have said aught, will prove the most unlicensed book itself within a short while; and was the immediate image of a Star Chamber[2] decree to that purpose made in those very times when that Court did the rest of those her pious works, for which she is now fallen from the stars with Lucifer.[3] Whereby ye may guess what kind of state prudence, what love of the people, what care of religion or good manners there was at the contriving, although with singular hypocrisy it pretended to bind books to their good behavior. And how it got the upper hand of your precedent order so well constituted before, if we may believe those men whose profession gives them cause to inquire most, it may be doubted there was in it the fraud of some old patentees and monopolisers in the trade of bookselling; who under pretence of the poor in their Company not to be defrauded, and the just retaining of each man his several copy, which God

that order was the beheading of a person, or the clipping of ears, or the burning of books. Two of Milton's own books later suffered a like fate. See *Introduction*, p. xviii.

[1] **authentic**: genuine. Cf. *P. L.* III, 656; IV, 719.

[2] **Star Chamber**: this Court was established by Henry VII in 1487. In the reign of Charles I "Every member of the Court, with the exception of the two Chief Justices, was also a Privy Councillor. The persons who were cited as defendants had invariably given offence to the Privy Council, and the great majority of the members of the Court were therefore in reality parties to the dispute which they were called upon to decide" (Gardiner, *History of England*, VII, 85). "Indeed, the world is now much terrified with the Star Chamber, there being not so little an offence against any proclamation but is liable and subject to the censure of that Court." — Quoted by Gardiner, VI, 1. This court was abolished July, 1641.

[3] **Lucifer**: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" — Isa. XIV, 12.

forbid should be gainsaid, brought divers glosing[1] colors to the House, which were indeed but colors, and serving to no end except it be to exercise a superiority over their neighbors; men who do not, therefore, labor in an honest profession to which learning is indebted, that they should be made other men's vassals. Another end is thought was aimed at by some of them in procuring by petition this Order, that having power in their hands, malignant[2] books might the easier scape abroad, as the event shows.

But of these sophisms and elenchs[3] of merchandise I skill not. This I know, that errors in a good government and in a bad are equally almost incident; for what magistrate may not be misinformed, and much the sooner, if liberty of printing be reduced into the power of a few; but to redress willingly and speedily what hath been erred,[4] and in highest authority to esteem a plain advertisement[5] more than others have done a sumptuous bribe, is a virtue, honored Lords and Commons, answerable to your highest actions, and whereof none can participate but greatest and wisest men.

[1] **glosing**: cf. *S. A.* 948.

[2] **malignant**: this word was "applied between 1641 and 1660 by the supporters of the Parliament and the Commonwealth to their adversaries." — *N. E. D.*

[3] **elenchs**: sophistical arguments.

[4] **erred**: see the construction in *P. L.* vi, 335.

[5] **advertisement**: notification, notice.

THE READY AND EASY WAY TO ESTABLISH A FREE COMMONWEALTH,[1]

AND THE EXCELLENCE THEREOF, COMPARED WITH THE INCONVENIENCES AND DANGERS OF READMITTING KINGSHIP IN THIS NATION.

Et nos
Consilium dedimus Syllæ, demus populo nunc.[2]

ALTHOUGH, since the writing of this treatise,[3] the face of things hath had some change, writs for new elections have been recalled, and the members[4] at first chosen readmitted from exclusion; yet not a little rejoicing to hear declared the resolution of those who are in power, tending to the establishment of a free commonwealth,[5] and to remove, if it be possi-

[1] For date of publication, see *Introduction*, p. xx.

[2] This does not appear in the first edition of the pamphlet. By *Consilium dedimus Syllæ* Milton doubtless refers to Monk, and the letter he had sent to him. See p. 202.

[3] Milton "had written the pamphlet while the late Rump was still sitting, while the conjunction between them and Monk was unbroken, and when the last news was that they had issued, or were about to issue, writs for the recruiting of their body by a large number of like-minded additional members" (Masson, v, 645, 646). These writs had been recalled, when this body was dissolved.

[4] The members that had been excluded from the Long Parliament on Dec. 6, 1648.

[5] Monk, famous for his taciturnity, had spoken no word indicating that he favored the recall of the Stuarts. "In the morning (of the 21st of Feb., 1660) I saw many soldiers going towards Westminster Hall, to admit the secluded members again. So I to Westminster Hall, and in Chancery I saw about twenty of them who had been at White Hall with General Monk, who came thither this morning, and made a speech to them; and recommended to them a Commonwealth, and against Charles Stuart."

ble, this noxious humor of returning to bondage, instilled of late by some deceivers, and nourished from bad principles and false apprehensions among too many of the people,[1] I thought best not to suppress what I had written, hoping that it may now be of much more use and concernment to be freely published, in the midst of our elections to a free Parliament, or their sitting to consider freely of the government, whom it behooves to have all things represented to them that may direct their judgment therein; and I never read of any state, scarce of any tyrant, grown so incurable as to refuse counsel from any in a time of public deliberation, much less to be offended. If their absolute determination be to enthrall us, before so long a Lent of servitude, they may permit us a little shroving-time first, wherein to speak freely and take our leaves of liberty. And because in the former edition,[2] through haste, many faults escaped and many books were suddenly dispersed, ere the note to mend them could be sent, I took the opportunity from this occasion to revise and somewhat to enlarge the whole discourse, especially that part which argues for a perpetual senate. The treatise, thus revised and enlarged, is as follows: —

The Parliament of England, assisted by a great

[1] The desire to return to the old government by a king, as the only escape from the tyranny of the army, had been rapidly growing among the people of England. Many were certain that Monk's intention had all along been to aid Charles in his return. In December Whitelocke had gone to Fleetwood with the proposition that the army should forestall Monk, and invite the king to come back. There were, indeed, plenty of **deceivers** who were saying that England should return to bondage.

[2] The sheets had been sent from the press, we infer from these words, without Milton's approval and without corrections which he wished to make.

number[1] of the people who appeared and stuck to them faithfullest in defence of religion and their civil liberties, judging kingship by long experience a government unnecessary, burdensome, and dangerous, justly and magnanimously abolished it,[2] turning regal bondage into a free commonwealth, to the admiration and terror of our emulous neighbors.[3] They took themselves not bound by the light of nature or religion to any former covenant,[4] from which the King

[1] History has shown that it was a minority of the people of England who supported the High Court of Justice, appointed by the Parliament, in the trial and condemnation of Charles I. There were never more than sixty-eight of the one hundred and thirty-five judges present at the trial, and it was with the greatest difficulty that enough signatures could be obtained for the death warrant. The King had to be brought secretly to the court in order to prevent a public demonstration; the people admitted to the back of the court room cried out, "God save the King." The Presbyterian clergy openly preached in his favor, and the Parliament of Scotland protested against the illegality of the Court. Milton wrote his *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, proving the rightness of bringing a tyrannical king to justice, in order to strengthen those who were weakening in purpose. But it was only the iron will of Cromwell that held the Court to its task. See Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War*, IV, 290–313.

[2] The king was beheaded on Jan. 30, 1649. On Feb. 7, the House passed the resolution that the office of king is "unnecessary, burdensome, and dangerous to the liberty, safety, and public interest of the People of this nation, and therefore ought to be abolished." — Masson, IV, 5.

[3] There appears now to be little evidence that there was either admiration or terror. "Among foreign powers and potentates a mere curious amazement, a feeling that the strange Islanders had gone mad, too mad to be meddled with" (Masson, III, 715). The attitude in Europe was, in general, indifference to the death of the king, but hostility toward the new Republic.

[4] "They tell us, that the law of nature justifies any man to defend himself, even against the king in person: let them show us then, why the same law may not justify much more a state or

himself, by many forfeitures of a latter date or discovery and our own longer consideration thereon, had more and more unbound us, both to himself and his posterity, as hath been ever the justice and the prudence of all wise nations that have ejected tyranny. They covenanted "to preserve the King's person and authority in the preservation of the true religion and our liberties,"[1] not in his endeavoring to bring in upon our consciences a popish religion;[2] upon our liberties, thraldom;[3] upon our lives, destruction: by his occasioning, if not complotting, as was after discovered, the Irish massacre, his fomenting and arming the rebellion, his covert leaguing with the rebels against us,[4] his refusing, more than seven times, pro-

whole people, to do justice upon him . . . justice done upon a tyrant is no more but the necessary self-defence of a whole commonwealth" (*P. W.* II, 44). "If I covenant, not to hurt an enemy . . . and he, after that, shall do me tenfold injury and mischief to what he had done when I so covenanted, and still be plotting what may tend to my destruction, I question not but that his after-actions release me; nor know I covenant so sacred, that withholds me from demanding justice on him." —*Ibid.* II, 30. See also *P. L.* VI, 177–79.

[1] This is almost the exact wording of one phrase in the second clause of the *Solemn League and Covenant* (see p. 103, n. 1). The second clause begins "That we shall in like manner, without respect of persons, endeavour the extirpation of Popery, etc."

[2] Henrietta Maria, the Queen, was a Catholic and maintained her private chapel and confessors, and had about her always Catholic courtiers. After his marriage, the King could with the greatest difficulty be brought to take any stern measures against the Catholics; moreover, after 1628, Laud was his chief advisor, and Laud was openly accused of seeking to bring in popery. But so direct a charge as Milton here makes cannot be proved. See Masson, I, 248.

[3] Charles had many times sought to enthrall his people by levying illegal taxes, and by imprisoning men without trial.

[4] This was the terrible massacre by the Catholics, beginning Oct. 23, 1641, of many thousands of the Protestants in Ireland.

positions most just and necessary to the true religion and our liberties, tendered him by the Parliament both of England and Scotland.[1] They made not their covenant concerning him with no difference between a king and a God, or promised him, as Job did to the Almighty, "to trust in him though he slay us"; they understood that the solemn engagement, wherein we all forswore kingship, was no more a breach of the covenant than the covenant was of the protestation[2] before, but a faithful and prudent going on both in words well weighed, and in the true sense of the covenant "without respect of persons,"[2] when we could not serve two contrary masters, God and the king, or the king and that more supreme law, sworn in the first place to maintain our safety and our liberty.

Some of the leaders claimed to be acting under commission from Charles, and this claim was believed by many in London (Masson, II, 311). As early as 1642, the Queen had advised Charles to grant to the Irish freedom of religion, that he might depend on an Irish army against the Parliament; from 1643 to 1645 the King was constantly planning and intriguing to bring about a peace with the Irish rebels, in order that he might have the services of the army that the Irish had gathered together to defend themselves after the massacre (Gardiner, I, 72, 125, 249, 346; II, 156–76). Milton may include the Scots also as rebels; on Dec. 26, 1647, Charles entered into a secret engagement with them to concede certain things, if they would enter England with an army in order to restore him to his throne.

[1] There were so many negotiations with Charles that it is difficult to know just what Milton may have included in his seven. The principal attempts to agree upon terms were the following: the various negotiations during Nov. 1642; the *Treaty of Oxford*, Feb. 1643; the *Treaty of Uxbridge*, Jan. and Feb. 1645; the *Proposals* of the Scots, Feb. and March, 1646; the *Nineteen Proposals*, July, 1646; the Propositions of April 21, 1647; the *Treaty of Newport*, Sept. and Oct. 1648.

[2] See p. 145, n. 1.

They knew the people of England to be a free people, themselves the representers of that freedom; and, although many were excluded,[1] and as many fled (so they pretended) from tumults to Oxford,[2] yet they were left a sufficient number to act in Parliament,[3] therefore not bound by any statute of preceding parliaments,[4] but by the law of nature[5] only, which is the only law of laws truly and properly to all mankind fundamental; the beginning and the end of all government; to which no parliament or people that will thoroughly reform but may and must have recourse, as they had, and must yet have, in church reformation[6] (if they thoroughly intend it) to evan-

[1] There were ninety-six members excluded by Colonel Pride, Dec. 6 and 7, 1648, because they had taken the side of the King in a vote for reconciliation.

[2] The King established his headquarters at Oxford on Nov. 29, 1642.

[3] The full House consisted of about five hundred members. Two thirds of the members had deserted at the opening of the war, and for three years there was a working force of only one hundred. In 1645 and 46 writs had been issued, and two hundred and thirty-five new members elected, but the number had, by exclusion and voluntary absence, dwindled to fifty or sixty, and this was the sufficient number which voted to try the King. — Masson, III, 698, 706.

[4] The passing of sentence without the sanction of law, which Milton here commends, was the weak point in the prosecution of the King; the Parliament was but a remnant, and even that not representative of the England of 1660; and, moreover, there was neither statute nor precedent to warrant the trial of a king by a parliament. On this ground Charles took his stand, and the Court had nothing to answer except that they were acting by the authority of the people. The leaders recognized the weakness of their position, but very few admitted openly that the strength of the House lay solely in the army.

[5] See p. 148, n. 3.

[6] The reorganization of the Church of England was perhaps the reform Milton most desired (see his pamphlet *Of Reforma-*

gelic[1] rules; not to ecclesiastical canons,[2] though never so ancient, so ratified and established in the land by statutes which for the most part are mere positive laws, neither natural nor moral:[3] and so by any parliament, for just and serious considerations, without scruple to be at any time repealed.[4]

If others of their number in these things were under force, they were not, but under free conscience; if others were excluded by a power which they could not

tion in England). He wanted absolute separation between church and state; the Bible as the sole guide of conduct; simplicity and freedom in the form of worship; the suppression of a paid ministry; and the abolition of all tithes for the support of the church. The last point is argued in his *The Likeliest Means of Removing Hirelings out of the Church.*

[1] evangelic: of the Gospel. See p. 18, n. 6.

[2] Milton had small respect for ecclesiastical canons, as may be seen by reading any one of his pamphlets dealing with questions of the church. "With good cause, therefore, it is the general consent of all sound protestant writers, that neither traditions, councils, nor canons of any visible church . . . but the scripture only, can be the final judge or rule in matters of religion, and that only in the conscience of every Christian to himself" (*P. W.* II, 524). Read the outline of law in the church, *P. W.* IV, 468–575.

[3] This contrast between the laws made *by* man and the law implanted *in* man occurs many times in the *Prose Works*. The clearest statement is, "The Law of God is either written or unwritten. The unwritten law is no other than that law of nature given originally to Adam, and of which a certain remnant, or imperfect illumination, still dwells in the hearts of all mankind." — *P. W.* IV, 378. See also *P. W.* III, 182, and the same idea stated astrologically in *P. W.* III, 403.

[4] Charles pleaded, "It is not my case alone; it is the freedom and liberty of the people of Enlgand; and do you pretend what you will, I stand more for their liberties; for, if power without law may make laws, may alter the fundamental laws of the kingdom, I do not know what subject he is in England that can be sure of his life, or anything that he calls his own." — Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War*, IV, 301.

resist,[1] they were not therefore to leave the helm of government in no hands, to discontinue their care of the public peace and safety, to desert the people in anarchy and confusion; no more than when so many of their members left them as made up in outward formality a more legal Parliament of three estates against them.[2] The best affected also and best principled of the people stood not numbering or computing on which side were most voices in Parliament, but on which side appeared to them most reason, most safety, when the House divided upon main matters. What was well motioned and advised, they examined not whether fear or persuasion carried it in the vote,[3] neither did they measure votes and counsels by the intentions of them that voted, knowing that intentions either are but guessed at or not soon enough known, and, although good, can neither make the deed such nor prevent the consequence from being bad. Suppose bad intentions in things otherwise well done: what was well done was by them who so thought, not the less obeyed or followed in the state, since in the church who had not rather follow Iscariot or Simon, the magician, though

[1] See p. 147, n. 1. [2] See p. 147, n. 3.

[3] Milton is doubtless here portraying the state of affairs during the months of Nov. and Dec. 1648, when the majority in Parliament, chiefly Presbyterians, was weakly and hesitatingly trying to come to terms with Charles, but was constantly in fear of the threatening attitude of the army, which demanded justice on the King. There must have been many who acted through fear and persuasion. The House voted, 136 to 102, disapproval of the action of the army in removing the King, and, 129 to 83, approval of the terms of the King. This majority, forcibly reduced by the army, left the minority which Milton so lauds. He sanctions the deeds of the army, but not the *ends* by which some persons were actuated. See the interesting account of these months in Masson, III, 610–620, 692–699.

to covetous ends, preaching, than Saul, though in the uprightness of his heart persecuting the gospel?[1]

Safer they, therefore, judged what they thought the better counsels, though carried on by some perhaps to bad ends, than the worse by others, though endeavored with best intentions. And yet they were not to learn that a greater number might be corrupt within the walls of a parliament as well as of a city; whereof in matters of nearest concernment all men will be judges,[2] nor easily permit that the odds of voices in their greatest council shall more endanger them by corrupt or credulous votes than the odds of enemies by open assaults, judging that most voices ought not always to prevail where main matters are in question. If others, hence, will pretend to disturb all counsels, what is that to them who pretend not, but are in real danger, not they only so judging, but a great, though not the greatest, number of their chosen patriots, who might be more in weight than the others in number, there being in number little virtue, but by weight and measure wisdom working all things,[3] and the dangers on either side they seriously thus weighed.

[1] **Iscariot**: Judas Iscariot. **Simon**: see Acts VIII, 9. **Saul**: see Phil. III, 6.

[2] The meaning of these clauses seems to be: besides they were not to learn, because they already knew it, that the greater number in Parliament as well as in the city might be so corrupt as to desire the return of the king; of which state of corruption in matters that relate most intimately to personal safety and welfare, all men will be judges, and will act according to their judgment regardless of this corrupt majority.

[3] This is Milton's corner-stone of government, that laws should be made by the wise, and good, and not by the voice of the majority (see also pp. 164, 192). The thought of the passage seems to be: if some people refuse to accept the acts of Parliament because passed by a minority, why should the law-makers care? In saving the country they placed themselves in real danger,

From the treaty,[1] short fruits of long labors and seven years' war; security for twenty years, if we can hold it; reformation in the church for three years; then put to shift again with our vanquished master. His justice, his honor, his conscience, declared quite contrary to ours, which would have furnished him with many such evasions, as in a book entitled "An Inquisition for Blood,"[2] soon after were not concealed;

and although they had the support of only a small number of the people, yet this number embraced the most loyal.

[1] This paragraph refers to the last effort, called the *Treaty of Newport*, to come to an agreement with the King. Parliament demanded the control of the militia for twenty years; Charles conceded it for ten years. It asked the entire abolition of Episcopacy, and the establishment of the Presbyterian system; Charles granted Presbyterianism for three years, with toleration for those of other religions. It wanted the confiscation of all lands belonging to bishops; Charles would not allow the alienation of this land from the church, but he did give way so far as to permit the leasing of it on a ninety-nine years' lease. Charles, further pressed on the church question, finally conceded, that at the end of the three years' Presbyterianism, there should be ordained bishops, yet that this ordination should be with the counsel and assistance of the presbyters, and that the control of episcopal jurisdiction should be in the hands of the Parliament. He asked for an act of oblivion to apply to both parties, and the Lords voted that no more than seven persons should be excepted from pardon. Those who had assisted the King, either directly or indirectly, were called delinquents, and by a vote of March 27, 1643, their property was to be sequestered (Gardiner: *History of the Great Civil War*, III, 197; IV, 217-18, 222). What the Parliament really desired was that the King should receive and not give laws; he yielded on every point, and the Lords were willing to accept his concessions, but the Commons had so little faith in his justice, honor, and conscience that it rejected the whole of his proposal.

[2] The book which called forth, in 1654, Milton's *Second Defence of the People of England*, the Latin title of which is:

pro Populo Anglicano
Defensio Secunda: Contra

bishops not totally removed, but left, as it were, in ambush, a reserve, with ordination in their sole power; their lands already sold not to be alienated, but rented, and the sale of them called "sacrilege"; delinquents, few of many brought to condign punishment; accessories punished, the chief author above pardon, though, after utmost resistance, vanquished; not to give, but to receive laws; yet besought, treated with, and to be thanked for his gracious concessions, to be honored, worshipped, glorified.

If this we swore to do, with what righteousness in the sight of God, with what assurance that we bring not by such an oath the whole sea of blood-guiltiness upon our own heads? If, on the other side, we prefer a free government, though for the present not obtained, yet all those suggested fears and difficulties,[1] as the event will prove, easily overcome, we remain finally secure from the exasperated regal power and out of snares;[2] shall retain the best part of our liberty, which is our religion,[3] and the civil part will be from these

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Infamem Libellum
Anonymnum cui titulus
Regii Sanguinis Clamor
ad Cœlum adversus
Parricidas Anglicanos.

[1] The chief fears and difficulties were the control of the House by the Army and the election of a Parliament that should be upon such a basis as to insure representation of the whole country; that should be able and willing to undertake the government; and especially that would not at once vote to reinstate kingship. Had the years of experiment given Milton any ground for assuming that these difficulties might be easily overcome?

[2] Secure from a king desiring vengeance on those who had opposed him, and free from the underhand plotting of the Stuarts.

[3] There was more toleration in religion than before the Civil War, but Milton's ideal of absolute religious freedom was never

who defer[1] us much more easily recovered, being neither so subtle nor so awful as a king reënthroned. Nor were their actions less both at home and abroad than might become the hopes of a glorious rising commonwealth; nor were the expressions both of army and people, whether in their public declarations or several writings, other than such as testified a spirit in this nation no less noble and well fitted to the liberty of a commonwealth than in the ancient Greeks or Romans.[2] Nor was the heroic cause[3] unsuccessfully defended to all Christendom against the tongue of a famous and thought-invincible adversary; nor the constancy and fortitude, that so nobly vindicated our liberty, our victory at once against two the most prevailing usurpers over mankind, supersition and tyranny, unpraised or uncelebrated in a written monument,[4] likely to outlive detraction, as it hath hitherto convinced or silenced not a few of our detractors, especially in parts abroad.

attained. After the abolition of Episcopacy there were many attempts to found a national church. See Firth, *The Last Years of the Protectorate*, I, 145–47.

[1] **defer**: delay, retard. Possibly he means the whole of the protectorate government of Cromwell, as a backward step from the pure republic which he wished to see established. See Masson, v, 600–01.

[2] For his confidence in Parliament see p. 34.

[3] "The good old Cause" was the watchword of those who had stood by the Commonwealth, and who desired to return to that form of government. See p. 201.

[4] His own *Defence of the People of England*. Claudius Salmasius (1588–1653), a professor at Leyden University, was considered the most learned scholar of his day and virtually the literary dictator of western Europe. He wrote in 1640 his *Defensio Regia pro Carolo I*, against which, in 1651, Milton wrote his famous pamphlet entitled *pro Populo Anglicano Defensio contra Claudii Anonymi*, alias *Salmasius, Defensionem Regiam.*

[1] After our liberty and religion thus prosperously fought for, gained, and many years possessed, except in those unhappy interruptions which God hath removed; now that nothing remains but in all reason the certain hopes of a speedy and immediate settlement forever in a firm and free [2] Commonwealth, for this extolled and magnified nation, regardless both of honor won or deliverances vouchsafed from Heaven, to fall back, or rather to creep back so poorly,[3] as it seems the multitude would, to their once abjured and detested thraldom of kingship, to be ourselves the slanderers of our own just and religious deeds, though done by some to covetous and ambitious ends, yet not, therefore, to be

[1] In the preceding paragraphs Milton has: (1) stated his reasons for reissuing his pamphlet; (2) outlined the work the House had accomplished; (3) reaffirmed his confidence in the Parliament and the nation. He now begins to set forth the disadvantages of a return to kingship.

[2] Nothing shows Milton to be the theorist, the man out of touch with public sentiment, more than these opening clauses. The Commonwealth had never been either **firm** or **free**, and the **certain hopes** of such a government were far less now than they had been at any time before.

[3] By invitations and concessions to Charles II. When the vote to reëstablish kingship was finally passed, the Parliament was in such a hurry and confusion that it made no stipulations on the all important question of religion. When the King landed at Dover, and all the way of the progress to London, there was much prostrating of men and women before him, much kissing of the hem of his garment, and much vowing of submission. "All degrees and ages and sexes — rich and poor, as I may say, and men, women, and children—, join in sending up this prayer to Heaven, *God bless King Charles! Long live King Charles!*, so as our English air is not susceptible of any other sound, and echoes out nothing else" (quoted by Masson, VI, 3, 4). "Indeed it was a wonder in that day to see the mutability of some, and the hypocrisy of others, and the servile flattery of all." — *Memoirs of Col. Hutchinson*, 402. See also Evelyn, *Diary* for May 29th, 1660.

stained with their infamy, or they to asperse the integrity of others; and yet these now by revolting from the conscience of deeds well done, both in church and state, to throw away and forsake, or rather to betray, a just and noble cause for the mixture of bad men who have ill-managed and abused it (which had our fathers done heretofore, and on the same pretence deserted true religion, what had long ere this become of our gospel, and all Protestant reformation so much intermixed with the avarice and ambition of some reformers?) and, by thus relapsing, to verify all the bitter predictions of our triumphing enemies, who will now think they wisely discerned and justly censured both us and all our actions as rash, rebellious, hypocritical, and impious, — not only argues a strange, degenerate contagion suddenly spread among us, fitted and prepared for new slavery, but will render us a scorn and derision to all our neighbors.[1]

And what will they at best say of us, and of the whole English name, but scoffingly, as of that foolish builder mentioned by our Saviour, who began to build a tower, and was not able to finish it? [2] Where is this goodly tower of a commonwealth, which the English boasted they would build to overshadow kings, and be another Rome in the west? The foundation, indeed, they laid gallantly, but fell into a worse confusion, not of tongues but of factions,[3] than those at the tower of

[1] See p. 144, n. 3. [2] See Luke, XIV, 28-30.

[3] **Factions** sprang up at once, the first being on the signing of the *Engagement*, which involved the abolition of the House of Lords. At the end of six weeks Cromwell warned the Parliament, "I think there is more cause of danger from disunion among ourselves than by anything from our enemies." There were the Fifth Monarchy advocates, who wanted the church to have full civil authority; the Levellers, who would have neither

Babel; and have left no memorial of their work behind them remaining but in the common laughter of Europe! Which must needs redound the more to our shame, if we but look on our neighbors, the United Provinces,[1] to us inferior in all outward advantages, who, notwithstanding, in the midst of greater difficulties, courageously, wisely, constantly, went through with the same work, and are settled in all the happy enjoyments of a potent and flourishing republic to this day.

Besides this, if we return to kingship, and soon repent (as undoubtedly we shall, when we begin to find the old encroachments coming on by little and little upon our consciences, which must necessarily proceed from king and bishop united inseparably in one interest),[2] we may be forced perhaps to fight over again all

House of Lords nor a Council of State but the fullest development of individual liberty; the mutiny in the army because of its distrust of Parliament; those who believed that Parliament should disband and issue writs for new elections; the various groups formed on the ever-present question of religion; and many other factions. Outside of the House the factions were legion, and the Parliament had all it could do to hold these in check. See Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and the Protectorate*, I, 3-5, 28, 32-35, 51, 274-75, 291.

[1] From 1572-77 the provinces of Holland and Zealand had fought to free themselves from the power of Spain, and this was the greater difficulty with which England had not had to cope. By the *Union of Utrecht*, in 1579, the seven provinces of Holland, Zealand, Utrecht, Gelderland, Overyssel, Groningen, and Friesland, had combined to form the Republic of the United Provinces.

[2] This was the watchword of the throne when the House of Stuart came to England. The motto of James was, "No bishop, no king," and Laud with his clergy became the most powerful of the forces working for the absolute authority of Charles I. James II sought to use the clergy but was less successful, because, being a Catholic, he could control only a minority of that body.

that we have fought, and spend over again all that we have spent,[1] but are never like to attain thus far as we are now advanced to the recovery of our freedom, never to have it in possession as we now have it, never to be vouchsafed hereafter the like mercies and signal assistances from Heaven in our cause, if by our ingrateful backsliding we make these fruitless; flying now to regal concessions [2] from his divine condescensions and gracious answers to our once importuning prayers against the tyranny which we then groaned under; making vain and viler than dirt the blood of so many thousand faithful and valiant Englishmen, who left us in this liberty, bought with their lives; losing by a strange after-game of folly all the battles we have won, together with all Scotland as to our conquest, hereby lost, which never any of our kings could conquer,[3] all the

[1] This reads like a prophecy of what the nation was to endure before it finally deposed James II, and elected William and Mary in 1689. Civil war was avoided, but only because the dispute between king and people was less complicated by the question of religion, because the people as a whole had the greatest terror of another conflict, and because the moral tone of the men who brought about the revolution could not be compared with the zeal and intrepidity of those who stood by Cromwell.

[2] The reaction against the shifting, unsteady government since the death of Cromwell caused the election of a Parliament which was servile in its concessions to Charles II, granting him willingly what had been hardly won from his father by the Civil War: it affirmed the prerogative of the Crown; it repealed the act which called for a triennial parliament, and justified him in the assertion that he would not call parliament when it was disadvantageous to the Crown; and it continued sitting for seventeen years.

[3] The early history of Scotland is one long succession of wars with England. The hardy Scots in their isolated position could not be held in submission, and England had always to reckon on their joining the enemy in case of any war. The process of uniting the two peoples began when James VI of Scotland became, in 1603, James I of England; it was continued by the taking of the

treasure we have spent, not that corruptible treasure only, but that far more precious of all our late miraculous deliverances; treading back again with lost labor all our happy steps in the progress of reformation, and most pitifully depriving ourselves the instant fruition of that free government which we have so dearly purchased, a free commonwealth, not only held by wisest men[1] in all ages the noblest, the manliest, the equallest, the justest government, the most agreeable to all due liberty and proportionate equality, both human, civil, and Christian, most cherishing to virtue and true religion, but also (I may say it with greatest probability) plainly commended, or rather enjoined, by our Saviour himself, to all Christians, not without remarkable disallowance, and the brand of Gentilism upon kingship.

God in much displeasure gave a king to the Israelites, and imputed it a sin to them that they sought one,[2] but Christ apparently forbids his disciples to admit of any such heathenish government. "The kings of the Gentiles," saith he, "exercise lordship over them: and they that exercise authority upon them are called Benefactors; but ye shall not be so: but he

Solemn League and Covenant in 1643, but was completed only in 1707 when the union was accepted by an agreement of the two nations. What Milton fears did not at once come true, as Scotland was more subservient to Charles II than was England herself, but the country rebelled on the question of religion, and William had to establish his supremacy with the sword.

[1] The chief of the wisest men who have discussed the theory of a free commonwealth, but advocating differing degrees of individual freedom, are: Plato in the *Republic*, Aristotle in the *Politics*, Plutarch in the *Life of Lycurgu.* Polybius in the *History of Rome*, Cicero in the *Republic*, and in modern times, More in the *Utopia*, and Bacon in the *New Atlantis.*

[2] 1 Sam. VIII.

that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that serveth."[1] The occasion of these, his words, was the ambitious desire of Zebedee's two sons to be exalted above their brethren in his kingdom, which they thought was to be erelong upon earth. That he speaks of civil government is manifest by the former part of the comparison, which infers the other part to be always in the same kind. And what government comes nearer to this precept of Christ than a free commonwealth, wherein they who are the greatest are perpetual servants and drudges to the public at their own cost and charges,[2] neglect their own affairs, yet are not elevated above their brethren, live soberly in their families, walk the street as other men, may be spoken to freely, familiarly, friendly, without adoration?[3] Whereas a king must be adored like a demigod, with a dissolute and haughty court about him, of vast expense and luxury, masks and revels,[4] to the debauching of our prime gentry, both male

[1] This quotation is from Luke, XXII, 25–26, see also Mark, IX, 34–35, but the passages relating definitely to Zebedee's children are Matt. XX, 20–27; Mark, X, 35–45. Read Milton's definition of a king and his duties in *P. R.* II., 458–80.

[2] On Aug. 10, 1911, the House of Commons, for the first time, voted that its members should receive salaries.

[3] A good picture of the highest type of public servant is to be found in *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, by his wife. See especially pp. 193–95, 346 ff. This departure from simplicity of living was, doubtless, one of the ways in which Cromwell failed to fulfil Milton's ideal. For a description of the state he assumed when Protector, read *Ibid.* 369–70.

[4] Masques and revels were the favorite amusements of the court; they cost large sums of money, — Shirley's *Triumph of Peace* cost £ 21,000 — because of the elaborate scenery and costumes. See the stage-directions prefixed to Ben Jonson's *Masques*, and a description of the *Triumph of Peace* in Masson, I, 461–66.

and female; not in their pastimes only, but in earnest, by the loose employments of court service, which will be then thought honorable. There will be a queen of no less charge, in most likelihood outlandish and a papist, besides a queen-mother such already; together with both their courts and numerous train; then a royal issue, and erelong severally their sumptuous courts; to the multiplying of a servile crew, not of servants only, but of nobility and gentry, bred up then to the hopes not of public, but of court offices, to be stewards, chamberlains, ushers, grooms, even of the close-stool; and the lower their minds debased with court opinions, contrary to all virtue and reformation, the haughtier will be their pride and profuseness. We may well remember this not long since at home,[1] nor need but look at present into the French court, where enticements and preferments daily draw away and pervert the Protestant nobility.[2]

[1] "The court of this king [James I] was a nursery of lust and intemperance. . . . The honour, wealth, and glory of the nation, wherein Queen Elizabeth left it, were soon prodigally wasted. . . . The generality of the gentry of the land soon learned the court fashion, and every great house in the country became a sty of uncleanness. To keep the people in their deplorable security . . . they were entertained with masks, stage plays, and various sorts of ruder sports. Then began murder, incest, adultery, drunkenness, swearing, fornication, and all sorts of ribaldry, to be no concealed but countenanced vices, because they held such conformity with the court example" (*Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, p. 78). The court of Charles I was not so dissolute, at least outwardly, for the king was temperate and chaste, and demanded more decency in his courtiers. But the court of the witty Charles II far surpassed that of James I in its *pride and profuseness*, in its desire for pleasure and its licentiousness. Read the account given by Pepys in his *Diary*, April 26, 1667, and the picture of court morals in *Memoirs of Count Gramont*, 105 ff.

[2] The magnificence and gayety of the court of Louis XIV, the splendor of the daily fêtes, the outward elegance and decorum,

As to the burden of expense,[1] to our cost we shall soon know it; for any good to us deserving to be termed no better than the vast and lavish price of our subjection, and their debauchery, which we are now so greedily cheapening, and would so fain be paying most inconsiderately to a single person, who, for anything wherein the public really needs him, will have little else to do but to bestow the eating and drinking of excessive dainties, to set a pompous face upon the superficial actings of state, to pageant himself up and down in progress among the perpetual bowings and cringings of an abject people,[2] on either side deifying and adoring him for nothing done that can deserve it. For what can he more than another man, who, even in the expression of a late court poet, sits only like a great cipher set to no purpose before a long row of other significant figures? Nay, it is well and happy for the people, if their king be but a cipher, being ofttimes a mischief, a pest, a scourge of the nation, and, which is worse, not to be removed, not to be controlled, much less accused or brought to punishment, without the danger of a common ruin, without the shaking and

the beauty of the women, the royal love of flattery, the servility of the courtiers, and the many amours of the king, are too well known to need retelling. Count Gramont says the court of Charles II was so like that of France, that it seemed as if he had brought France with him to England. — *Memoirs*, 111.

[1] Milton now turns from the moral effect of recalling the king to the expense which this act will impose upon the people. Which does he present as the stronger reason against kingship? Johnson, in his *Life of Milton*, says the only argument given is that "a popular government was the most frugal."

[2] "The eagerness of men, women, and children, to see his Majesty, and kiss his hands, was so great, that he had scarce leisure to eat for some days, coming as they did from all parts of the Nation." — Evelyn, *Diary*, June 4, 1660.

almost subversion of the whole land, whereas in a free commonwealth any governor or chief counsellor offending may be removed and punished without the least commotion.[1]

Certainly,[2] then, that people must needs be mad or strangely infatuated that build the chief hope of their common happiness or safety on a single person, who, if he happen to be good, can do no more than another man; if to be bad, hath in his hands to do more evil without check than millions of other men.[3] The happiness of a nation must needs be firmest and certainest in full and free council of their own electing, where no single person, but reason only, sways. And what madness is it for them who might manage nobly their own affairs themselves, sluggishly and weakly to devolve all on a single person; and, more like boys under age than men, to commit all to his patronage and disposal, who neither can perform what he undertakes, and yet for[4] undertaking it, though royally paid, will not be their servant, but their lord! How unmanly must it needs be to count such a one the breath of our nostrils, to hang all our felicity on him, all our safety, our well-being; for which, if we were aught else but sluggards or babies, we need depend on none but God and our own counsels, our own active virtue and industry!

[1] Milton makes no provision for this removal and punishment, and the Commonwealth had not furnished him with examples of how it might be done without the least commotion.

[2] Here follows an appeal to the sense of individual right and power in the person, the nation, the king.

[3] Why has not a king as much power for good as for evil?

[4] The *nor* clause, which the reader expects to follow the neither clause, is suppressed, and he passes quickly to the thought, *yet if he should undertake it.* for is used in the sense, as regards. See *P. L.* I, 635.



"Go to the ant, thou sluggard," saith Solomon; "consider her ways, and be wise; which, having no prince, ruler, or lord, provides her meat in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest,"[1] which evidently shows us that they who think the nation undone without a king, though they look grave or haughty, have not so much true spirit and understanding in them as a pismire: neither are these diligent creatures hence concluded to live in lawless anarchy, or that commended, but are set the examples to imprudent and ungoverned men, of a frugal and self-governing democracy or commonwealth, safer and more thriving in the joint providence and counsel of many industrious equals than under the single domination of one imperious lord.

It may be well wondered that any nation, styling themselves free, can suffer any man to pretend hereditary right[2] over them as their lord, whenas, by ac-

[1] Prov. VI, 6. In the King James version, the second phrase reads, "which having no guide, overseer, or ruler."

[2] Milton is here expressing individually the opinion which had in some measure held in the councils of the English nation from the beginning. The course of the inheritance of the crown was never fully defined by statute. The early Anglo-Saxon kings were always elected, although in practice generally chosen from the members of one family. "James I was the twenty-third occupant of the English throne since the death of William the Conqueror. Of the number, twelve had succeeded to the throne not being legal heirs of the Conqueror, according to the doctrine of primogenitary succession, and three more, although legal primogenitary heirs, had not succeeded in the regular course of descent. Edward II and Richard II had been solemnly deposed by Parliament, and on the latter occasion the throne itself was declared to be vacant. The line of succession had on several occasions been altered, as we have seen, by the authority of Parliament. Yet in the teeth of these facts, the lawyers and divines of the Stuart period laboured to establish the doctrine of an indefeasible hereditary right to the crown." — Taswell-Langmead, *English Constitutional History*, 217–18.

knowledging that right, they conclude themselves his servants and his vassals, and so renounce their own freedom. Which how a people and their leaders especially can do, who have fought so gloriously for liberty; how they can change their noble words and actions, heretofore so becoming the majesty of a free people, into the base necessity of court flatteries and prostrations, — is not only strange and admirable,[1] but lamentable to think on. That a nation should be so valorous and courageous to win their liberty in the field, and, when they have won it, should be so heartless[2] and unwise in their counsels as not to know how to use it, value it, what to do with it or with themselves, but, after ten or twelve years' prosperous war[3] and contestation with tyranny, basely and besottedly to run their necks again into the yoke which they have broken, and prostrate all the fruits of their victory for nought at the feet of the vanquished, besides our loss of glory, and such an example as kings or tyrants never yet had the like to boast of, will be an ignominy, if it befall us, that never yet befell any nation possessed of their liberty; worthy indeed themselves, whatsoever they be, to be forever slaves; but that part of the nation which consents not with them, as I persuade me of a great number, far worthier than by their means to be brought into the same bondage.[4]

Considering these things so plain, so rational, I cannot but yet further admire on the other side how any

[1] **admirable**: causing wonder or surprise. See **admire** in the beginning of the next paragraph, and *P. L.* III, 271; VIII, 75.

[2] **heartless**: without courage, spiritless.

[3] The war began August 22, 1642, and closed with the battle of Worcester, September 3, 1651.

[4] Observe the lack of sure confidence in the popularity of his cause. For his disbelief in majority rule see pp. 150, 192.

man, who hath the true principles of justice and religion in him, can presume or take upon him to be a king and lord over his brethren, whom he cannot but know,[1] whether as men or Christians, to be for the most part every way equal or superior to himself; how he can display with such vanity and ostentation his regal splendor, so supereminently above other mortal men; or, being a Christian, can assume such extraordinary honor and worship to himself, while the kingdom of Christ, our common king and lord, is hid to this world, and such Gentilish [2] imitation forbid in express words by himself to all his disciples. All protestants hold that Christ in his church hath left no vicegerent of his power; but himself, without deputy, is the only head thereof,[3] governing it from heaven: how then can any Christian man derive his kingship from Christ, but with worse usurpation than the pope his headship over the church, since Christ not only hath not left the least shadow of a command for any such vicegerence from him in the state as the Pope pretends for his in the church, but hath expressly declared that such regal dominion is from the Gentiles, not from him, and hath strictly charged us not to imitate them therein?

[4] I doubt not but all ingenuous and knowing men

[1] Is not the king's firm conviction of his own superiority the very foundation of his power?

[2] See quotation, p. 186.

[3] "As Christ is the head of the mystical church, so no one besides Christ has the right or power of presiding over the visible church" (*P. W.* IV, 426). Milton quotes to prove this statement, Matt. XVIII, 20; XXVIII, 20; 1 Cor. v, 4; Heb. III, 6. "Christ hath a government of his own, sufficient of itself to all his ends and purposes in governing his church." — *Ibid.* II, 533.

[4] In this paragraph Milton begins the second topic of his pamphlet, a plea for the Commonwealth, and answers briefly the

will easily agree with me that a free commonwealth without single person or House of Lords is by far the best government, if it can be had; but we have all this while, say they, been expecting it, and cannot yet attain it. It is true, indeed, when monarchy was dissolved, the form of a commonwealth should have forthwith been framed, and the practice thereof immediately begun, that the people might have soon been satisfied and delighted with the decent order, ease, and benefit thereof: we had been then by this time firmly rooted past fear of commotions or mutations, and now flourishing. This care of timely settling a new government

charge of his opponents that the Commonwealth had had its opportunity and had failed to create a stable government. He prefixes to his *History of England*, book third, a full clear statement of the reasons why the Commonwealth had failed (*P. W.* v. 236-40). See the brief history of events on pp. xix, xx. The **impatient or disaffected** were chiefly the *Levellers* who wanted a more thorough-going democracy; the **ambitious leaders** in the army were Fleetwood, Desborough, and Lamberts (see Masson, v, 437 ff.). "Not the less is it true that Republicanism was yet the general creed of the Army, and that, could a universal vote have been taken through the regiments in England, Scotland, and Ireland, it would have kept out Charles Stuart. Nay, so ingrained was the Republican feeling in the ranks of the soldiery, and so gloomily were they watching Monk, that, could any suitable proportion of them have been brought together, and could any fit leader have been present to hold up his sword for the Commonwealth, they would have rallied round him with acclamations" (*Ibid.* 562). The officers did, indeed, present to Monk a petition, "To declare that the Government of these Three Nations should be a Commonwealth, without Kingship, or any other single person by what Name, or Title, soever dignified or distinguished: And that this present Parliament should be required to pass this into an Act, as a Fundamental Constitution, not to be shaken or questioned by future Parliaments; and that the Army ought, upon no other terms, to maintain their Authority."— *The Mystery and Method of his Majesty's Happy Restauration*, John Price, 1680.

instead of the old, too much neglected, hath been our mischief. Yet the cause thereof may be ascribed with most reason to the frequent disturbances, interruptions, and dissolutions which the Parliament hath had, partly from the impatient or disaffected people, partly from some ambitious leaders in the army, much contrary, I believe, to the mind and approbation of the army itself, and their other commanders, once undeceived, or in their own power.

Now is the opportunity, now the very season, wherein we may obtain a free commonwealth, and establish it forever in the land, without difficulty or much delay. Writs are sent out for elections, and, which is worth observing, in the name not of any king, but of the keepers of our liberty,[1] to summon a free Parliament, which then only will indeed be free, and deserve the true honor of that supreme title, if they preserve us a free people. Which never parliament was more free to do, being now called not as heretofore, by the summons of a king, but by the voice of liberty. And if the people, laying aside prejudice and impatience,[2] will seriously and calmly now consider their own good, both religious and civil, their own liberty, and the only means thereof, as shall be here laid down before them, and will elect their knights and burgesses [3] able men, and

[1] There was a debate in Parliament on the question, in whose name the writs for the new Parliament should be issued, and it was finally settled "in the name of the Keepers of the Liberties of England." See Pepys, *Diary*, March 9.

[2] The utter impossibility of realizing this if, as experience had shown, and the fundamental position this hypothesis holds in his scheme, really places the whole plan practically on the same basis as other ideal republics.

[3] **knights**: representatives from the counties. **burgesses**: representatives from boroughs, corporate towns, or universities.

according to the just and necessary qualifications (which, for aught I hear, remain yet in force unrepealed, as they were formerly decreed in parliament),[1] men not addicted to a single person or House of Lords, the work is done; at least, the foundation firmly laid of a free commonwealth, and good part also erected of the main structure. For the ground and basis of every just and free government (since men have smarted so oft for committing all to one person), is a general council of ablest men, chosen by the people to consult of public affairs from time to time for the common good. In this Grand Council must the sovereignty, not transferred, but delegated only, and as it were deposited, reside,[2] with this caution, they must have the

[1] The qualifications for the first Parliament of the Protectorate, in 1654, had been, "All persons who had been engaged in war against the Parliament since Jan. 1641–2, except such as had given signal testimony since then of their good affection, were to be disabled from electing or being elected — and all concerned in the Irish Rebellion, and all Roman Catholics, were to be disabled forever. Within these limits, any person over the age of twenty one years, and of 'known integrity, fearing God, and of good conversation' was to be eligible, and all persons having real or personal estate worth £200 were to be electors" (Masson, IV, 543-44). These had been substantially the qualifications since that time. On March 13–16, 1660, the question was discussed and the wording somewhat changed, making it include a larger number of persons: "All Papists and all who had aided and abetted the Irish Rebellion were to be incapable of being members, and also all who, or whose fathers, had advised or voluntarily assisted in any war against the Parliament since Jan. 1, 1641–2, unless there had been subsequent manifestation of their good affections." — *Ibid.* V, 551. See Pepys, Feb. 14, 1660.

[2] There were many heated debates regarding this question of the supreme power, and many others besides Milton were trying to solve it. The Commons Journal of Sept. 8, 1659, records: "At this time the opinions of men were much divided concerning a Form of Government to be established amongst us. The

forces by sea and land committed to them for preservation of the common peace and liberty; must raise and manage the public revenue, at least with some inspectors deputed for satisfaction of the people, how it is employed; must make or propose, as more expressly shall be said anon, civil laws, treat of commerce, peace, or war with foreign nations; and, for the carrying on some particular affairs with more secrecy and expedition, must elect, as they have already out of their own number and others, a Council of State.[1]

great officers of the Army, as I said before, were for a Select Standing Senate, to be joined to the Representative of the People. Others laboured to have the supreme authority to consist of an Assembly chosen by the People, and a Council of State to be chosen by that Assembly, to be vested with executive power, and accountable to that which should next succeed, at which time the power of the said Council should determine. Some were desirous to have a Representative of the People constantly sitting, but changed by a perpetual rotation. Others proposed that there might be joined to the Popular Assembly a select number of men in the nature of the Lacedæmonian Ephori, who should have a negative in things wherein the essentials of the Government should be concerned, such as the exclusion of a Single Person, touching the Liberty of Conscience, alteration of the Constitution, and other things of the last importance to the State. Some were of opinion that it would be most conducive to the public happiness if there might be two Councils chosen by the People, the one to consist of about 300, and to have the power only of debating and proposing laws, the other to be in number about 1000, and to have the power finally to resolve and determine — every year a third part to go out and others to be chosen in their places." Quoted by Masson, v, 480–81.

[1] Observe the powers of the Grand Council: they are to control the army and navy; to manage the public revenue; to make or propose laws; and to elect a Council of State. There is to be no executive, but his function is to be filled by the Council of State. During the years of experimentation there was constantly felt in the government the need of a smaller body than the House. During the year, 1659–60, of anarchy, each new governing body erected its Council of State. These many Councils exercised

And, although it may seem strange at first hearing, by reason that men's minds are prepossessed with the notion of successive parliaments, I affirm that the Grand or General Council, being well chosen, should be perpetual; for so their business is or may be, and ofttimes urgent, the opportunity of affairs gained or lost in a moment. The day of council cannot be set as the day of a festival, but must be ready always to prevent or answer all occasions. By this continuance they will become every way skilfullest, best provided of intelligence from abroad, best acquainted with the people at home, and the people with them. The ship of the Commonwealth is always under sail; they sit at the stern; and, if they steer well, what need is there to change them, it being rather dangerous? Add to this that the Grand Council is both foundation and main pillar of the whole state; and to move pillars and foundations, not faulty, cannot be safe for the building.

I see not, therefore, how we can be advantaged by successive and transitory parliaments: but that they are much likelier continually to unsettle rather than to settle a free government, to breed commotions, changes, novelties, and uncertainties,[1] to bring neglect

varying degrees of authority; that of the executive, of the advisor to the executive, of the Upper House. See Masson III, 41; IV, 11, 127, 222, 309, 354.

[1] Milton's belief in the rule of the best men, and his fear of more commotions and changes than he had recently witnessed, blinded him to the fact that the chief sin of the Long Parliament had been, in the eyes of England, its unwillingness to disband itself and allow the election of a more representative body; he seems, indeed, to justify this long term of office by the necessity of the times. "The errors also of his government had brought the kingdom to such extremes, as were incapable of all recovery without the absolute continuance of a parliament." — *P. W.* I, 352–53.

upon present affairs and opportunities, while all minds are in suspense with expectation of a new assembly, and the assembly, for a good space, taken up with the new settling of itself. After which, if they find no great work to do, they will make it by altering or repealing former acts or making and multiplying new, that they may seem to see what their predecessors saw not, and not to have assembled for nothing, till all law be lost in the multitude of clashing statutes. But if the ambition of such as think themselves injured that they also partake not of the government, and are impatient till they be chosen, cannot brook the perpetuity of others chosen before them, or if it be feared that long continuance of power may corrupt sincerest men, the known expedient is, and by some lately propounded, that annually (or, if the space be longer, so much perhaps the better) the third part of senators may go out according to the precedence of their election, and the like number be chosen in their places, to prevent their settling of too absolute a power, if it should be perpetual; and this they call "partial rotation." [1]

[1] This was the doctrine of the political debating club, called the *Rota Club.* "In 1659, in the beginning of Michaelmas term, they had every night a meeting at the then Turk's Head in the New Palace Yard at Westminster (the next house to the stairs where people take water), called Miles's coffee-house — to which place their disciples and virtuosi would commonly then repair: and their discourses about Government and of ordering of a Commonwealth were the most ingenious and smart that ever were heard, for the arguments in the Parliament house were but flat to those" (Anthony Wood, *Athenæ Oxonienses*, II, 438–39, 1692). The Club was founded by James Harrington, the author of *The Commonwealth of Oceana*, published in 1656; this book contained in the form of a romance his plan of an ideal republic. He depicted a full and free Commonwealth based chiefly on two principles, the balance of property and the election by ballot of representatives to the national council, with the rotation of

But I could wish that this wheel, or partial wheel, in state, if it be possible, might be avoided, as having too much affinity with the wheel of Fortune.[1] For it appears not how this can be done without danger and mischance of putting out a great number of the best and ablest, in whose stead new elections may bring in as many raw, unexperienced, and otherwise affected, to the weakening and much altering for the worse of public transactions. Neither do I think a perpetual senate, especially chosen or intrusted by the people, much in this land to be feared, where the well-affected, either in a standing army or in a settled militia, have their arms in their own hands.[2] Safest, therefore, to me it seems, and of least hazard or interruption to affairs, that none of the grand council be moved, unless by death or just conviction of some crime; for what can be expected firm or steadfast from a floating foundation? However, I forejudge not any probable expedient, any temperament that can be found in things of this nature so disputable on either side.

members. He held that there could be no free Commonwealth when property, and especially land, was in the hands of a few men, but only when the whole people were land-owners, could the nation be called a republic. He declared that one third of those governing should at the end of each year pass into the ranks of the governed, and not be eligible to reëlection until after three years. Some prominent men were attracted by the doctrines of the Club, and for a few months it seemed as if it might have a good deal of influence. Milton reluctantly approves, as a last resort, of one of its principles. See Pepys, *Diary*, Jan. 10, 17 and Feb. 20, 1660.

[1] See *P. R.* IV, 317; *S. A.* 172.

[2] The history of the preceding years had abundantly shown that there was a possible redress in a resort to the armed force, but the frequent attempts of the army to control the Parliament had been one of the chief causes of the restlessness and dissatisfaction in the country. See the Letter to Monk, p. 202.

Yet, lest this which I affirm be thought my single opinion, I shall add sufficient testimony.[1] Kingship itself is, therefore, counted the more safe and durable because the king, and for the most part his council, is not changed during life. But a commonwealth is held immortal, and therein firmest, safest, and most above fortune; for the death of a king causeth oft-times many dangerous alterations, but the death now and then of a senator is not felt, the main body of them still continuing permanent in greatest and noblest commonwealths, and as it were eternal. Therefore, among the Jews the supreme council of seventy, called the Sanhedrim, founded by Moses,[2] in Athens that of Areopagus,[3] in Sparta that of the ancients,[4] in Rome, the Senate,[5] consisted of members chosen for term of life; and by that means remained as it were still the same to generations. In Venice[6] they change indeed oftener

[1] Note the contrast in method between this pamphlet and the Areopagitica; in this he uses very little the argument from example.

[2] The Sanhedrin was the great council at Jerusalem, which consisted of seventy-one members chosen from the scribes, elders, prominent members of the high-priestly families, and with the High-Priest acting as president.

[3] **Areopagus**: see p. 31, n. 1.

[4] "The senate, as I said before, consisted at first of those that were assistants to Lycurgus in his great enterprise. Afterward, to fill up any vacancy that might happen he ordered the most worthy men to be selected, of those that were full three score years old. This was the most respectable dispute in the world, and the contest was truly glorious; for it was not who should be the swiftest among the swift, or strongest of the strong, but who was the wisest and best among the good and wise." — Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*.

[5] The Roman **senate** was at first elected from the patrician class, afterwards the members were chosen by higher officers or became members by virtue of holding certain offices; later they were chosen also from the plebeian class.

[6] There were in Venice "four tiers in the original structure

than every year some particular council of state, as that of six, or such other; but the true Senate, which upholds and sustains the government, is the whole aristocracy immovable. So in the United Provinces the States-General,[1] which are indeed but a council of state deputed by the whole union, are not usually the same persons for above three or six years; but the states of every city, in whom the sovereignty hath been placed time out of mind, are a standing Senate, without succession, and accounted chiefly in that regard the main prop of their liberty. And why they should be so in every well-ordered commonwealth, they who write of policy give these reasons: that to make the senate successive not only impairs the dignity and lustre of the senate, but weakens the whole commonwealth, and brings it into manifest danger; while by this means the secrets of state are frequently divulged, and mat-

of the constitution, the doge, the College, the Senate, and the Great Council" (Horatio F. Brown, *Studies in Venetian History*, I, 306). The College, or Cabinet of Ministers, was composed of "the doge, his six councillors, and the three chiefs of the court of appeal . . . in addition to these there were the six savii grandi, the five savii di terra firma, and the five savii da mar." The second and third of these last three groups held office only six months; the six savii grandi each took a week in turn, "and the savio of the week was, in fact, prime minister of Venice." — *Ibid.* I, 300–01.

[1] **The States-General of the United Provinces** was the legislative body formed at the Union of Utrecht (see p. 156, n. 1). The members were not representatives of the people, but ambassadors of the individual provinces. See C. M. Davies, *The History of Holland*, II, 75–76. "As the States-General were not themselves sovereign, but representatives only of the provincial States by whom they were deputed, and they again of the governments of the towns which composed them, it was necessary that all measures should be referred to the provincial States, and by them to the towns of which they were the deputies." — *Ibid.* 442.

ters of greatest consequence committed to inexpert and novice counsellors, utterly to seek[1] in the full and intimate knowledge of affairs past.

I know not, therefore, what should be peculiar in England to make successive parliaments thought safest or convenient here more than in other nations, unless it be the fickleness which is attributed to us as we are islanders. But good education and acquisite[2] wisdom ought to correct the fluxible[3] fault, if any such be, of our watery situation. It will be objected that in those places where they had perpetual senates they had also popular remedies against their growing too imperious: as, in Athens, besides Areopagus, another senate of four or five hundred;[4] in Sparta, the Ephori;[5] in Rome, the Tribunes of the people.[6]

[1] **to seek**: at a loss, ignorant; see *P. L.* VIII, 197; C. 366.

[2] **acquisite**: acquired.

[3] **fluxible**: apt to flow; here in the figurative sense, changeable, inconstant.

[4] Draco (seventh cen. B.C.) created a council of 401 members, 100 chosen from each one of the four tribes; the function of this council was to "discuss beforehand every resolution which the authorities had to propose to the people." Cleithenes, about a hundred years later, divided the people into ten tribes and had 50 chosen from each tribe, thus making the council consist of 500. Holm, *The History of Greece*, I, 392, 400, 422.

[5] The **Ephori**, five in number, were elected annually by the people: "The Lacedæmonian constitution is defective in another point; I mean the Ephoralty. This magistracy has authority in the highest matters, but the Ephors are all chosen from the people, and so the office is apt to fall into the hands of very poor men, who, being badly off, are open to bribes. . . . And so great and tyrannical is their power, that even the kings have been compelled to court them." — Aristotle, *Politics*, II, 9.

[6] The **Tribunes of the people**, at first two, then five and at last ten, were officers chosen by the people, from about 490 B.C., to protect them against the oppression of the patrician class, and to defend them against the unjust acts of the Senate or consuls.

But the event tells us that these remedies either little availed the people or brought them to such a licentious and unbridled democracy as, in fine, ruined themselves with their own excessive power. So that the main reason urged why popular assemblies are to be trusted with the people's liberty rather than a senate of principal men, because great men will be still endeavoring to enlarge their power, but the common sort will be contented to maintain their own liberty, is by experience found false, none being more immoderate and ambitious to amplify their power than such popularities[1] which were seen in the people of Rome, who, at first contented to have their tribunes, at length contended with the Senate that one consul, then both, soon after that the censors and prætors also, should be created plebeian, and the whole empire put into their hands, adoring lastly those who most were adverse to the senate, till Marius,[2] by fulfilling their inordinate desires, quite lost them all the power for which they had so long been striving, and left them under the tyranny of Sylla.[3] The balance, therefore, must be exactly so

Their duties were in the beginning largely police, but with time they gained more and more power, until they came to sit in the senate, to propose laws, and to issue edicts.

[1] **popularities**: popular assemblies or democratic governments.

[2] Caius **Marius** (155–86 B.C.), the great general who was victorious in the war with Jugurtha, who conquered the tribes of the Cimbrians and the Teutons threatening Rome, who was elected consul seven times, and who created a standing army of professional soldiery, thus preparing the way for a military despotism. Plutarch says of him, "He courted the. people, and endeavored to ingratiate himself with the meanest of them." He voted to approve the law proposed by Saturninus, the tribune of the people, that the Senate should confirm whatever the people decreed. He had, therefore, to sanction the crimes of Saturninus, and this was the beginning of his downfall.

[3] Lucius Cornelius **Sulla** (138–78 B.C.), the general, who as

set as to preserve and keep up due authority on either side, as well in the senate as in the people. And this annual rotation of a senate to consist of three hundred, as is lately propounded, requires also another popular assembly upward of a thousand, with an answerable rotation. Which, besides that it will be liable to all those inconveniences found in the aforesaid remedies, cannot but be troublesome and chargeable, both in their motion and their session,[1] to the whole land, unwieldy with their own bulk, unable in so great a number to mature their consultations as they ought, if any be allotted them,[2] and that they meet not from so many parts remote to sit a whole year lieger[3] in one place, only now and then to hold up a forest of fingers, or to convey each man his bean[4] or ballot into

questor in the army aroused the jealousy of Marius, because he was instrumental in the capture of Jugurtha. In 88 when the war with Mithradates began, Marius demanded that Sulla should resign to him the control of the troops. Thus the civil war between the two generals broke out, in which Sulla led a Roman army against Rome. He was victorious, instituting a reign of terror by putting to death his enemies and many of the enemies of his friends. "These massacres were not the only thing that afflicted the Romans. He declared himself dictator, reviving that office in his own favor, though there had been no instance of it for a hundred and twenty years. He got a decree of amnesty for all he had done: and, as to the future, it invested him with the power of life and death, of confiscating, of colonizing, of building or demolishing cities, of giving or taking away kingdoms at his pleasure." — Plutarch, *Life of Sylla.*

[1] Such large numbers would be a burden to the nation because of the difficulty of travel to and from the place of meeting, and of providing residence during the time of the session.

[2] This looks as if he means that all law is to originate in the upper house, and to be presented to the lower only at the discretion of the upper.

[3] **lieger**: resident, stationary.

[4] Black and white beans were used in Greece and Rome for

the box, without reason shown or common deliberation; incontinent of secrets,[1] if any be imparted to them; emulous and always jarring with the other senate. The much better way, doubtless, will be, in this wavering condition of our affairs, to defer the changing or circumscribing of our senate, more than may be done with ease, till the Commonwealth be thoroughly settled in peace and safety, and they themselves give us the occasion.

Military men hold it dangerous to change the form of battle in view of an enemy; neither did the people of Rome bandy with their Senate, while any of the Tarquins[2] lived, the enemies of their liberty; nor sought, by creating tribunes, to defend themselves against the fear of their patricians, till sixteen years after the expulsion of their kings, and in full security of their state, they had, or thought they had, just cause[3] given them by the Senate. Another way will be to well qualify and refine elections, not committing all to the noise and shouting of a rude multitude, but permitting only those of them who are rightly qualified to nominate as many as they will, and out of that number others of a better breeding to choose a less number more judiciously, till, after a third or fourth sifting and refining of exactest choice, they only be left chosen

taking the ballot; also in Holland in the seventeenth century. See Davies, I, 79.

[1] Cf. *S. A.* 775.

[2] Tarquinius Priscus, 616–578 B.C., and Tarquinius Superbus, 534–510 B.C., were the fifth and seventh Etruscan kings of Rome; they enlarged and beautified and strengthened the city. The latter, especially by the use of his despotic power, lived in great splendor. He was deposed, and the people swore that never again should a king rule in Rome; they elected annually two consuls to have authority in his place.

[3] See p. 176.

who are the due number, and seem by most voices the worthiest.[1]

To make the people fittest to choose and the chosen fittest to govern will be to mend our corrupt and faulty education, to teach the people faith, not without virtue, temperance, modesty, sobriety, parsimony, justice ; not to admire wealth or honor; to hate turbulence and ambition ; to place every one his private welfare and happiness in the public peace, liberty, and safety. They shall not then need to be much mistrustful of their chosen patriots in the Grand Council, who will be then rightly called the true keepers of our liberty, though the most of their business will be in foreign affairs.[2] But, to prevent all mistrust, the people then will have their several ordinary assemblies (which will henceforth quite annihilate the odious power and name of committees [3]) in the chief towns of every county, without the trouble, charge, or time lost of summoning and assembling from far in so great a number, and so long residing from their own houses, or removing of their families, to do as much at home in their several shires, entire or subdivided, toward the securing of their liberty, as a numerous assembly of them all formed and convened on purpose with the wariest rotation. Whereof I shall speak more ere the end of this discourse,[4] for it may be referred to time, so we be still going on by degrees to perfection. The people

[1] Compare the plan of elections with that which Plato proposes in the *Laws*, VI, 753.

[2] That is, righteousness will so prevail that their only business will be dealing with other nations.

[3] Milton's official position had given him a hearty hatred of the dilatoriness and arbitrariness of committees. Their name was legion in the time of the Commonwealth and Protectorate.

[4] See pp. 196–97.

well weighing and performing these things, I suppose, would have no cause to fear, though the Parliament abolishing that name, as originally signifying but the parley of our Lords and Commons with their Norman king when he pleased to call them, should, with certain limitations of their power, sit perpetual, if their ends be faithful and for a free commonwealth, under the name of a Grand or General Council.

Till this be done I am in doubt whether our state will be ever certainly and thoroughly settled; never likely till then to see an end of our troubles and continual changes, or at least never the true settlement and assurance of our liberty. The Grand Council being thus firmly constituted to perpetuity, and still, upon the death or default of any member, supplied and kept in full number,[1] there can be no cause alleged why peace, justice, plentiful trade, and all prosperity should not thereupon ensue throughout the whole land, with as much assurance as can be of human things that they shall so continue (if God favor us, and our wilful sins provoke him not), even to the coming of our true and rightful and only to be expected King, only worthy as he is our only Saviour, the Messiah, the Christ, the only heir of his eternal Father, the only by him anointed and ordained since the work of our redemption finished, universal Lord of all mankind.

The way propounded is plain, easy, and open before us, without intricacies, without the introducement of new or absolute forms or terms or exotic models,[2] ideas that would effect nothing, but with a number of new injunctions to manacle the native liberty of man-

[1] He makes no provision for the manner of electing those who are to keep it in full number.

[2] For other schemes of reorganization proposed see p. 168, n. 2.

kind, turning all virtue into prescription, servitude, and necessity, to the great impairing and frustrating of Christian liberty. I say again, this way lies free and smooth before us; is not tangled with inconveniencies; invents no new encumbrances; requires no perilous, no injurious, alteration or circumscription of men's lands and properties; secure that in this commonwealth, temporal and spiritual, lords removed, no man or number of men can attain to such wealth or vast possession as will need the hedge of an agrarian law [1] (never successful, but the cause rather of sedition, save only where it began seasonably with first possession) to confine them from endangering our public liberty. To conclude, it can have no considerable objection made against it that it is not practicable, lest it be said hereafter that we gave up our liberty for want of a ready way or distinct form proposed of a free commonwealth. And this facility we shall have above our next neighboring commonwealth (if we can keep us from the fond conceit of something like a duke of Venice, put lately into many men's heads; by some one or other subtly driving on under that notion his own ambitious ends to lurch [2] a crown), that our lib-

[1] He doubtless refers to the plan of the *Rota Club*. See p. 171, n. 1.

[2] **to lurch**: to get hold of by stealth, steal.

"The all but universal conviction, however, even among the Republicans, was that the Republic was doomed, and that, if the last and worst consummation in a return of Charles Stuart was to be prevented, it could only be by consenting to some single-person government of a less fatal kind. O that Richard's Protectorate could be restored! . . . But might not Monk himself be invested with the sovereignty?" (Masson, v, 556). Pepys says in his *Diary*, March 3, "He told me he feared there was new design hatching, as if Monk had a mind to get into the saddle. Returning, met with Mr. Gifford, who told me, as I hear from

erty shall not be hampered or hovered over by any engagement to such a potent family as the house of Nassau,[1] of whom to stand in perpetual doubt and suspicion, but we shall live the clearest and absolutest free nation in the world.

On the contrary, if there be a king,[2] which the inconsiderate multitude are now so mad upon, mark how far short we are like to come of all those happinesses which in a free state we shall immediately be possessed of. First, the Grand Council, which, as I showed before, should sit perpetually (unless their leisure give them now and then some intermissions or vacations, easily manageable by the Council of State left sitting) shall be called, by the king's good will and utmost endeavor, as seldom as may be. For it is only the king's right, he will say, to call a parliament; and this he will do most commonly about his own affairs rather than the kingdom's, as will appear plainly so soon as they are called. For what will their business then be, and the chief expense of their time, but an endless tugging between petition of right and royal prerogative, especially about the negative voice, militia, or

many, that things are in a very doubtful posture, some of the Parliament being willing to keep the power in their hands." March 5, "Great hopes of the King's coming again." March 6, "My Lord told me, that there was great endeavours to bring in the Protector again; but he told me, too, that he did believe it would not last long if he were brought in; no, nor the King neither, (though he seems to think that he will come in) unless he carry himself very soberly and well. Everybody now drinks the King's health without any fear, whereas before it was very private that a man dare do it."

[1] **Nassau**: the powerful family of Germany, from a branch of which have sprung the stadtholders and sovereigns of Holland.

[2] There follows, under the form of a prediction, a brief review of the relation of king and people in parliaments during the reigns of James I and Charles I.

subsidies, demanded and oft-times extorted without reasonable cause appearing to the Commons, who are the only true representatives of the people and their liberty, but will be then mingled with a court faction; besides which within their own walls [1] the sincere part of them who stand faithful to the people will again have to deal with two troublesome counter-working adversaries from without, mere creatures of the king, spiritual, and the greater part, as is likeliest of temporal lords,[2] nothing concerned with the people's liberty.

If these prevail not in what they please, though never so much against the people's interest, the Parliament shall be soon dissolved, or sit and do nothing; not suffered to remedy the least grievance, or enact aught advantageous to the people. Next, the Council of State shall not be chosen by the Parliament, but by the King,[3] still his own creatures, courtiers, and favorites, who will be sure in all their counsels to set their master's grandeur and absolute power, in what they are able, far above the people's liberty. I deny not but that there may be such a king, who may regard the common good before his own, may have no vicious favorite, may hearken only to the wisest and incorruptest [4] of his parliament; but this rarely happens in a monarchy, not elective; and it behooves not a wise nation to commit the sum of their well-being, the

[1] Within the walls of Parliament.

[2] The creatures of the king, both spiritual and temporal, such as Laud and Buckingham and Wentworth.

[3] The personal government of Charles I lasted from 1629 to 1640, during which time he chose the members of his council and the judges of the Star Chamber from among those who would assist him in carrying out his designs.

[4] **incorruptest**: morally uncorrupted or incorruptible. Cf. *P. L.* XI, 56.

whole state of their safety, to fortune. What need they; and how absurd would it be, whenas they themselves, to whom his chief virtue will be but to hearken, may with much better management and despatch, with much more commendation of their own worth and magnanimity, govern without a master? Can the folly be paralleled, to adore and be the slaves of a single person for doing that which it is ten thousand to one whether he can or will do, and we without him might do more easily, more effectually, more laudably ourselves? Shall we never grow old enough to be wise, to make seasonable use of gravest authorities, experiences, examples? Is it such an unspeakable joy to serve, such felicity to wear a yoke? to clink our shackles, locked on by pretended law of subjection, more intolerable and hopeless to be ever shaken off, than those which are knocked on by illegal injury and violence?

Aristotle, our chief instructor in the universities, lest this doctrine be thought sectarian, as the royalist would have it thought, tells us in the third of his Politics[1] that certain men at first, for the matchless ex-

[1] "The first governments were kingships, probably for this reason, because of old, when cities were small, men of eminent virtue were few. They were made kings because they were benefactors, and benefits can only be bestowed by good men. But when many persons equal in merit arose, no longer enduring the pre-eminence of one, they desired to have a commonwealth, and set up a constitution. The ruling class soon deteriorated and enriched themselves out of the public treasury; riches became the path to honour, and so oligarchies naturally grew up. These passed into tyrannies and tyrannies into democracies; for love of gain in the ruling classes was always tending to diminish their number, and so to strengthen the masses, who in the end set upon their masters and established democracies." — Aristotle, *Politics*, III, 15.

cellence of their virtue above others, or some great public benefit, were created kings by the people, in small cities and territories, and in the scarcity of others to be found like them; but when they abused their power, and governments grew larger, and the number of prudent men increased, that then the people, soon deposing their tyrants, betook them, in all civilest places, to the form of a free commonwealth. And why should we thus disparage and prejudicate[1] our own nation as to fear a scarcity of able and worthy men united in counsel to govern us, if we will but use diligence and impartiality to find them out and choose them, rather than yoking ourselves to a single person, the natural adversary and oppressor of liberty; though good, yet far easier corruptible by the excess of his singular power and exaltation, or, at best, not comparably sufficient to bear the weight of government, nor equally disposed to make us happy in the enjoyment of our liberty under him?

But admit that monarchy of itself may be convenient to some nations, yet to us who have thrown it out, received back again, it cannot but prove pernicious. For kings to come, never forgetting their former ejection, will be sure to fortify and arm themselves sufficiently for the future against all such attempts hereafter from the people, who shall be then so narrowly watched and kept so low that, though they would never so fain, and at the same rate of their blood and treasure, they never shall be able to regain what they now have purchased and may enjoy, or to free themselves from any yoke imposed upon them.[2] Nor will

[1] **prejudicate**: prejudge. See *All's Well that Ends Well,* I, ii, 8.

[2] Milton's profound discouragement leads him to underesti-

they dare to go about it; utterly disheartened for the future, if these their highest attempts prove unsuccessful: which will be the triumph of all tyrants hereafter over any people that shall resist oppression; and their song will then be, to others, How sped the rebellious English? to our posterity, How sped the rebels, your fathers?

This is not my conjecture, but drawn from God's known denouncement against the gentilizing Israelites, who, though they were governed in a commonwealth of God's own ordaining, he only their king, they his peculiar people, yet affecting rather to resemble heathen, but pretending the misgovernment of Samuel's sons,[1] no more a reason to dislike their commonwealth than the violence of Eli's sons [2] was imputable to that priesthood or religion, clamored for a king. They had their longing, but with this testimony of God's wrath: "Ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day."[3] Us if he shall hear now, how much less will he hear when we cry hereafter, who once delivered by him from a king, and not without wondrous acts of his providence, insensible and unworthy of those high mercies, are returning precipi-

mate the English temper and power of resistance. Charles II would have been glad to impose a yoke upon the people and free himself from the Parliament, but he was less conscientious than his father, and hence when principle was at stake, he gave way, instead of stubbornly standing for what he believed to be the right, as Charles I had done; he was too pleasure-loving to exert himself to the utmost of his power in a struggle with the people; and he was afraid to bring in a foreign army, lest be might be beaten and compelled to go again into exile.

[1] 1 Sam. VIII, 4, 5.

[2] 1 Sam. II, 12-17; III, 12-14.

[3] 1 Sam. VIII, 18.

tantly, if he withhold us not, back to the captivity from whence he freed us!

Yet neither shall we obtain or buy at any easy rate this new gilded yoke, which thus transports us; a new royal revenue must be found, a new episcopal, for those are individual; both which being wholly dissipated, or bought by private persons, or assigned for service done, and especially to the army, cannot be recovered without a general detriment and confusion to men's estates, or a heavy imposition on all men's purses; benefit to none but to the worst and ignoblest sort of men, whose hope is to be either the ministers of court riot and excess, or the gainers by it. But, not to speak more of losses and extraordinary levies on our estates, what will then be the revenges and offences remembered and returned, not only by the chief person, but by all his adherents, — accounts and reparations that will be required, suits, indictments, inquiries, discoveries, complaints, informations, who knows against whom or how many, though perhaps neuters, if not to utmost infliction, yet to imprisonment, fines, banishment, or molestation? If not these, yet disfavor, discountenance, disregard, and contempt on all but the known royalist, or whom he favors, will be plenteous.[1]

[1] Much of the confusion which Milton, in this paragraph, predicts did follow on the reëstablishment of kingship, but the agreement — known as the Declaration of Breda — made with Charles II before he entered England certainly diminished that confusion. The early acts of Parliament were the carrying out of these provisions: the revenue of the crown was fixed at £1,200,000, which was about £300,000 greater than that of Charles I; the king declared that he would grant the freest indemnity to all, provided they would return to the loyalty and obedience of good subjects; the only exceptions to this were to be made by the Parliament and not by the King. Thirteen regi-

Nor let the new royalized Presbyterians [1] persuade themselves that their old doings, though now recanted, will be forgotten, whatever conditions be contrived or trusted on. Will they not believe this; nor remember the pacification, how it was kept to the Scots;[2] how

cides were finally executed; many regicides and other opponents of the king and kingship suffered imprisonment or the loss of property and position; some escaped and remained exiles the rest of their lives. The lands of the King and the clergy were to revert to their former owners, and here much confusion arose and many suffered great hardship; the Independent and Presbyterian clergy were turned out of their livings, and the heads and fellows of the two colleges had to surrender their places to those who had previously held them. But withal the confusion was less than was to be expected, and the King showed far more leniency and wisdom than Milton prophesies of him.

[1] The **Presbyterians** were not forgotten, but many of them had quietly changed their point of view. In a debate on a *Declaration of his Majesty concerning Ecclesiastical Affairs*, Baxter said: "None of them now spoke for Presbytery, or thought of bringing any of the essential differences between the Presbyterian system and the Episcopal into the discussion. They had, all of them, practically ceased to be Presbyterians, and had consented to accept Episcopacy and a Liturgy; what they now spoke for was simply an abatement of the excesses of Episcopacy and the excesses of Ritual. It was a strange pass for the great body of the English Presbyterians to have come to in the person of their chief representatives. But the fact was as Baxter states it." — Masson, VI, 90–100.

[2] The condition on which the Scots were to bring help to the Parliament had been that England should sign the *Solemn League and Covenant* establishing Presbyterianism in England, and extirpating Popery and Prelacy (Masson, III, 13–15). The test of loyalty to the Parliament was the signing of this Covenant, as had been promised the Scots. But by no means all of even the members of Parliament were willing to sign it, and in the army practically only the officers consented to it. By 1649, the Parliament had become so liberal toward other forms of religion that the *Covenant* was supplanted by the *Engagement*, "I do declare and promise that I will be true and faithful to the Common-

other solemn promises many a time to us? Let them but now read the diabolical forerunning libels, the faces, the gestures, that now appear foremost and briskest in all public places, as the harbingers of those that are in expectation to reign over us; let them but hear the insolencies, the menaces, the insultings, of our newly animated common enemies crept lately out of their holes, their hell I might say, by the language of their infernal pamphlets, the spew of every drunkard, every ribald; nameless, yet not for want of license, but for very shame of their own vile persons, not daring to name themselves, while they traduce others by name; and give us to foresee that they intend to second their wicked words, if ever they have power, with more wicked deeds.[1]

wealth of England, as the same is established without a King or a House of Lords."

[1] All that the newspapers now publish then appeared in the form of pamphlets or weekly news-letters or news-sheets. London was flooded with these publications, usually appearing from unlicensed presses. The act for the licensing of the press, passed in 1643, was still in force, but this proved futile to control the kind of pamphlets described. So bitter had been the opposition to the Parliament after the death of the King, that a new law was necessary, directed especially against the seditious and libelous tracts, against that which was false or misrepresenting. "No 'book or pamphlet, treatise, sheet or sheets of news' was to be published without a licence. The penalty for spreading abroad scandalous or libelous books was to be £10 or forty days' imprisonment for the author, £5 or twenty days' imprisonment for the printer, and £2 or ten days' imprisonment for the seller, whilst the purchaser was to forfeit £1 if he did not give information within four and twenty hours" (Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate*, I, 193–94). And there was added to this: "Whereas divers vagrant persons, of idle conversations, having forsaken their usual callings, and accustomed themselves after the manner of hawkers to sell and cry about the streets, and in other places, pamphlets and other books, and under col-

Let our zealous backsliders forethink now with themselves how their necks yoked with these tigers of Bacchus,[1] these new fanatics of not the preaching, but the sweating tub,[2] inspired with nothing holier than the venereal pox,[3] can draw one way under monarchy to the establishing of church discipline[4] with these new disgorged atheisms. Yet shall they not have the honor to yoke with these, but shall be yoked under them; these shall plough on their backs. And do they among them, who are so forward to bring in the single person, think to be by him trusted or long regarded? So trusted they shall be, and so regarded, as by kings are wont reconciled enemies; neglected, and soon after discarded, if not persecuted for old traitors; the first inciters, beginners, and more than to the third part actors, of all that followed.

our thereof to disperse all sorts of dangerous libels, to the intolerable dishonour of the Parliament and the whole Government of the Commonwealth, be it ordained and enacted . . . that no such hawkers shall be any more permitted, and that they and all ballad-singers, shall . . . be conveyed and carried to the House of Correction, there to be whipped as common rogues and then dismissed" (Masson, IV, 117–18). "More than 30,000 political pamphlets and newspapers were issued from the press during the 20 years from 1640 to the Restoration. They may be seen at the British Museum bound up in two thousand volumes" (May; *Constitutional History*, II, 241. See some of these ballads and libels in Ashton, *Humour, Wit, and Satire of the Seventeenth Century*, 213, 252, 259, 293, 295, 380, 382). In 1660 those who desired the return of Charles II broke out into new libels and ribaldry against the Parliament and Presbyterianism.

[1] When Dionysus in his wanderings came to the river, Zeus sent a tiger to bear him across.

[2] The reference is of course to Diogenes. Cf. *Comus*, 708.

[3] venereal; see *S. A.* 533.

[4] The Act of Uniformity, reëstablishing the Church of England, was passed in 1662.

It will be found also that there must be then, as necessarily as now (for the contrary part will be still feared), a standing army[1] which for certain shall not be this, but of the fiercest cavaliers, of no less expense, and perhaps again under Rupert.[2] But let this army be sure they shall be soon disbanded, and likeliest without arrear or pay; and, being disbanded, not be sure but they may as soon be questioned for being in arms against their king. The same let them fear who have contributed money, which will amount to no small number, that must then take their turn to be made delinquents and compounders.[3] They who past reason and recovery are devoted to kingship perhaps will answer that a greater part by far of the nation will have it so, the rest, therefore, must yield.

Not so much to convince these, which I little hope, as to confirm them who yield not, I reply that this greatest part have both in reason, and the trial of just battle,[4]

[1] The desire of the Parliament was to disband the army, after paying the long-standing arrears of money, and to this Charles II gave his consent. But the rising of fanatics, in London in 1661, gave him the excuse for retaining a part of the not-yet dismissed army, and this 5000 men formed the basis of what afterwards became a **standing army**.

[2] **Rupert**, the nephew of Charles I, had been especially hated, because during the war he was famous for his swift action in battle and for his mercilessness. See the caricatures of him in *Humour, Wit, and Satire of the Seventeenth Century*, 103–12. "That inhuman Prince Rupert." — *Ibid.* 97.

[3] **delinquents**: see p. 151, n. 1. **compounders**: On January 30, 1644, the Houses offered pardon to all delinquents who would submit before a certain date, and they were allowed to compound or settle for their delinquency by the payment of a certain sum to be assessed by the Parliament; this to be used in defraying public expenses. —Gardiner, *History of the Great Civil War*, III, 197–98.

[4] That is, in the decisive battles of the Civil War.

lost the right of their election what the government shall be. Of them who have not lost that right, whether they for kingship be the greater number, who can certainly determine? Suppose they be, yet of freedom they partake all alike, one main end of government; which, if the greater part value not, but will degenerately forego, is it just or reasonable that most voices against the main end of government should enslave the less number that would be free?[1] More just it is, doubtless, if it come to force, that a less number compel a greater to retain, which can be no wrong to them, their liberty than that a greater number, for the pleasure of their baseness, compel a less most injuriously to be their fellow-slaves. They who seek nothing but their own just liberty have always right to win it and to keep it, whenever they have power, be the voices never so numerous that oppose it. And how much we above others are concerned to defend it from kingship, and from them who in pursuance thereof so perniciously would betray us and themselves to most certain misery and thraldom, will be needless to repeat.

Having thus far shown with what ease we may now obtain a free commonwealth, and by it, with as much ease, all the freedom, peace, justice, plenty, that we can desire; on the other side, the difficulties, troubles,

[1] Here Milton affirms more clearly and fully than before (pp. 150, 164) his belief that the few wise men should rule the many. See Aristotle's discussion of this subject, *Politics*, III, 4, 7; III, 10; III, 13, 2-7; III, 18; and "For if liberty and equality, as is thought by some, are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost. And since the people are the majority, and the opinion of the majority is decisive, such a government must necessarily be a democracy."—*Ibid.* IV, 4, 23.

uncertainties, nay, rather impossibilities, to enjoy these things constantly under a monarchy; I will now proceed to show more particularly wherein our freedom and flourishing condition will be more ample and secure to us under a free commonwealth than under kingship.

The whole freedom of man consists either in spiritual or civil liberty. As for spiritual, who can be at rest, who can enjoy anything in this world with contentment, who hath not liberty to serve God, and to save his own soul, according to the best light which God hath planted in him to that purpose, by the reading of his revealed will and the guidance of his Holy Spirit? That this is best pleasing to God, and that the whole Protestant church allows no supreme judge or rule in matters of religion but the Scriptures, and these to be interpreted by the Scriptures themselves, which necessarily infers liberty of conscience, I have heretofore proved at large in another treatise,[1] and might yet further, by the public declarations, confess-

[1] The Christian Doctrine, a treatise written in Latin (*De Doctrina Christiana*) to prove from texts of Scripture, taken literally, the nature of God, Christ, and man, and their relation to each other. In the preface Milton says: "I resolved not to repose on the faith or judgement of others in matters relating to God; but on the one hand, having taken the grounds of my faith from divine revelation alone, and on the other, having neglected nothing which depended on my own industry, I thought fit to scrutinize and ascertain for myself the several points of my religious belief, by the most careful perusal and meditation of the Holy Scriptures themselves. . . . I deemed it therefore safest and most advisable to compile for myself, by my own labour and study, some original treatise which should be always at hand, derived solely from the word of God itself, and executed with all possible fidelity, seeing that I could have no wish to practice any imposition on myself in such a matter." — *P. W.* IV, 2-4.

ions, and admonitions of whole churches and states, obvious in all histories since the reformation.

This liberty of conscience, which above all other things ought to be to all men dearest and most precious, no government more inclinable not to favor only, but to protect, than a free commonwealth, as being most magnanimous, most fearless, and confident of its own fair proceedings. Whereas kingship, though looking big, yet indeed most pusillanimous, full of fears, full of jealousies, startled at every umbrage, as it hath been observed of old to have ever suspected most and mistrusted them who were in most esteem for virtue and generosity of mind, so it is now known to have most in doubt and suspicion them who are most reputed to be religious. Queen Elizabeth, though herself accounted so good a protestant, so moderate, so confident of her subjects' love, would never give way so much as to presbyterian reformation in this land, though once and again besought, as Camden [1] relates; but imprisoned and persecuted the very proposers thereof, alleging it as her mind and maxim unalterable that such reformation would diminish regal authority.

What liberty of conscience can we then expect of others, far worse principled from the cradle, trained up and governed by popish and Spanish counsels, and on such depending hitherto for subsistence? Especially what can this last Parliament expect, who, having revived lately and published the Covenant, have reengaged themselves never to readmit episcopacy? [2]

[1] William Camden, 1551–1623, the learned antiquarian who wrote in Latin the Annals of the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

[2] When the Long Parliament, which had been broken up in 1648, was brought together again in February, 1660, it proceeded to reëstablish Presbyterianism and to enact, on March 5, "That the solemn League and Covenant be printed and published, and

Which no son of Charles returning but will most certainly bring back with him,[1] if he regard the last and strictest charge of his father, "to persevere in, not the doctrine only, but government of the church of England, not to neglect the speedy and effectual suppressing of errors and schism," among which he accounted presbytery one of the chief.

Or if, notwithstanding that charge of his father, he submit to the covenant, how will he keep faith to us, with disobedience to him; or regard that faith given, which must be founded on the breach of that last and solemnest paternal charge, and the reluctance, I may say the antipathy, which is in all kings, against presbyterian and independent discipline? For they hear the gospel speaking much of liberty, — a word which

set up and forthwith read in every church, and also read once a year according to former Act of Parliament, and that the said Solemn League and Covenant be also set up in this House." — Masson, v, 549.

[1] In a book, published ten days after the King's death, called *Eikon Basilike: The True Portraicture of His Sacred Majestie in his Solitudes and Sufferings*, the next to the last chapter is addressed to his son, and in this Charles says (Masson, IV, 35): "I do require and entreat you, as your Father and King, that you never suffer your heart to receive the least check against, or disaffection from, the true religion established in the Church of England." There was much heated discussion as to whether the King had written the book, but it had an enormous influence in the reaction which followed upon the beheading of Charles. Milton was commissioned by the Parliament to answer it, and in this answer, called *Eikonoklastes*, he assumes that it was written by Charles. With reference to the passage quoted he says: "First, he hath the same fixed opinion and esteem of his old Ephesian goddess, called the church of England, as he had ever; and charges strictly his son after him to persevere in that anipapal schism, (for it is not much better), as that which will be necessary both for his soul's and the kingdom's peace." — *P. W.* I, 475.

monarchy and her bishops both fear and hate, but a free commonwealth both favors and promotes and not the word only, but the thing itself. But let our governors beware in time, lest their hard measure to liberty of conscience be found the rock whereon they shipwreck themselves, as others have now done before them in the course wherein God was directing their steerage to a free commonwealth; and the abandoning of all those whom they call sectaries,[1] for the detected falsehood and ambition of some, be a wilful rejection of their own chief strength and interest in the freedom of all Protestant religion, under what abusive name soever calumniated.

The other part of our freedom consists in the civil rights and advancements of every person according to his merit; the enjoyment of those never more certain, and the access to these never more open, than in a free commonwealth. Both which, in my opinion, may be best and soonest obtained if every county in the land were made a kind of subordinate commonalty or commonwealth, and one chief town or more, according as the shire is in circuit, made cities, if they be not so called already, where the nobility and chief gentry, from a proportionable compass of territory annexed to each city, may build houses or palaces befitting their quality, may bear part in the government, make their own judicial laws, or use those that are, and execute them by their own elected judicatures and judges without appeal, in all things of civil government between man and man. So they shall have justice in their own hands, law executed fully and finally in their own counties and precincts, long wished and spoken of, but never yet obtained. They shall have none then to

[1] **sectaries**: see p. 116, n. 3.

blame but themselves if it be not well administered; and fewer laws to expect or fear from the supreme authority; or to those that shall be made of any great concernment to public liberty, they may, without much trouble in these commonalties, or in more general assemblies called to their cities from the whole territory on such occasion, declare and publish their assent or dissent by deputies, within a time limited, sent to the grand council; yet so as this their judgment declared shall submit to the greater number of other counties or commonalties, and not avail them to any exemption of themselves, or refusal of agreement with the rest, as it may in any of the United Provinces, being sovereign within itself, oft-times to the great disadvantage of that union.[1]

In these employments they may, much better than they do now, exercise and fit themselves till their lot fall to be chosen into the Grand Council, according as their worth and merit shall be taken notice of by the people. As for controversies that shall happen between men of several counties, they may repair, as they do now, to the capital city, or any other more commodious, indifferent place and equal judges. And this I find to have been practised in the old Athenian commonwealth, reputed the first and ancientest place of civility in all Greece; that they had in their several cities a peculiar, in Athens a common, government; and their right, as it befell them, to the administration of both.

They should have here also schools and academies at their own choice, wherein their children may be bred up in their own sight to all learning and noble

[1] In the plan here proposed note the points of similarity to our own State and Federal Government. For **United Provinces**, see p. 156, n. 1.

education; not in grammar only, but in all liberal arts and exercises. This would soon spread much more knowlege and civility, yea, religion, through all parts of the land, by communicating the natural heat of government and culture more distributively to all extreme parts, which now lie numb and neglected, would soon make the whole nation more industrious, more ingenious at home, more potent, more honorable abroad.[1] To this a free commonwealth will easily assent (nay, the Parliament hath had already some such thing in design); for of all governments a commonwealth aims most to make the people flourishing, virtuous, noble, and high-spirited. Monarchs will never permit, whose aim is to make the people wealthy indeed perhaps, and well fleeced, for their own shearing, and the supply of regal prodigality, but otherwise softest, basest, viciousest, servilest, easiest to be kept under. And not only in fleece, but in mind also sheepishest, and will have all the benches of judicature annexed to the throne, as a gift of royal grace, that we have justice done us: whenas nothing can be more essential to the freedom of a people than to have the adminstration of justice, and all public ornaments, in their own election, and within their own bounds, without long travelling or depending on remote places to obtain their right, or any civil accomplishment, so it be not supreme, but

[1] "The state, as I was saying, is a plurality, which should be united and made into a community by education" (Aristotle, *Politics*, II, 5, 15). "But of all the things which I have mentioned that which most contributes to the permanence of constitutions is the adaptation of education to the form of government. . . . The best laws, though sanctioned by every citizen of the state, will be of no avail unless the young are trained by habit and education in the spirit of the constitution." —*Ibid.* V, 9, 11.

subordinate to the general power and union of the whole republic.

In which happy firmness, as in the particular above mentioned, we shall also far exceed the United Provinces, by having, not as they (to the retarding and distracting oft-times of their counsels or urgentest occasions), many sovereignties united in one commonwealth, but many commonwealths under one united and entrusted sovereignty. And when we have our forces by sea and land, either of a faithful army or a settled militia, in our own hands, to the firm establishing of a free commonwealth, public accounts under our own inspection, general laws and taxes, with their causes, in our own domestic suffrages, judicial laws, offices, and ornaments at home in our own ordering and administration, all distinction of lords and commoners, that may anyway divide or sever the public interest, removed, what can a perpetual senate have then wherein to grow corrupt, wherein to encroach upon us, or usurp?[1] Or, if they do, wherein to be formidable? Yet if all this avail not to remove the fear or envy of a perpetual sitting, it may be easily provided, to change a third part of them yearly or every two or three years, as was above mentioned; or that it be at those times in the people's choice whether they will change them or renew their power, as they shall find cause.

I have no more to say at present: few words will save us, well considered; few and easy things, now seasonably done. But, if the people be so affected as to prostitute religion and liberty to the vain and

[1] He returns to the point of the perpetual senate, knowing it to be the vulnerable part of his whole scheme, and the part his enemies would surely hold up to ridicule.

groundless apprehension that nothing but kingship can restore trade, not remembering the frequent plagues and pestilences [1] that then wasted this city, such as through God's mercy we never have felt since; and that trade flourishes nowhere more than in the free commonwealths of Italy, Germany, and the Low Countries, before their eyes at this day; yet if trade be grown so craving and importunate through the profuse living of tradesmen that nothing can support it but the luxurious expenses of a nation upon trifles or superfluities; so as if the people generally should betake themselves to frugality, it might prove a dangerous matter, lest tradesmen should mutiny for want of trading,[2] and that therefore we must forego and set to sale religion, liberty, honor, safety, all concernments divine or human, to keep up trading; if, lastly, after all this light among us, the same reason shall pass for current, to put our necks again under kingship, as was made use of by the Jews to return back to Egypt, and to the worship of their idol queen, because they falsely imagined that they then lived in more plenty and prosperity:[3] our condition is not sound, but rotten, both in religion and all civil prudence, and will bring us soon, the way we are marching, to those calamities which attend always and unavoidably on luxury, all national judgments under foreign and domestic slavery. So far we shall be from mending our condition by monarchizing our government, whatever new conceit now possesses us.

[1] The greatest ravages of the plague had been in 1603 and 1625.

[2] This was one of the arguments for the return of kingship: that a court with its luxurious living increased trade and provided employment for a large number of people.

[3] See Num. XI, 4–6; XIV, 1–3. **their idol queen**, the goddess of plenty.

However, with all hazard I have ventured what I thought my duty to speak in season,[1] and to forewarn my country in time, wherein I doubt not but there may be many wise men in all places and degrees, but am sorry the effects of wisdom are so little seen among us.[2] Many circumstances and particulars I could have added in those things whereof I have spoken; but a few main matters now put speedily in execution will suffice to recover us, and set all right; and there will want at no time who are good at circumstances, but men who set their minds on main matters, and sufficiently urge them, in these most difficult times, I find not many.

What I have spoken is the language of that which is not called amiss "the good old Cause";[3] if it seem strange to any, it will not seem more strange, I hope, than convincing to backsliders. Thus much I should perhaps have said, though I were sure I should have spoken only to trees and stones; and had none to cry to, but with the prophet, "O earth, earth, earth"![4] to tell the very soil itself what her perverse inhabitants are deaf to. Nay, though what I have spoke should happen (which Thou suffer not, who didst create mankind free! nor Thou next, who didst redeem us from

[1] It was far too late to stem the tide in favor of the king. Masson (v, 559) thinks Monk himself would have been glad to retain a commonwealth in some form, had he not recognized the impossibility of curbing the desire of the people for a return to that form of government under which they had flourished in the past of the nation's history.

[2] This was the chief cause of Milton's discouragement, that there were many men to quibble about details, but no one was wise enough to set his thought and effort upon formulating a principle and putting it into active operation.

[3] See p. 153, n. 3.

[4] Jer. XXII, 24–30.

being servants of men!) to be the last words of our expiring liberty. But I trust I shall have spoken persuasion to abundance of sensible and ingenuous men; to some, perhaps, whom God may raise to these stones to become children of reviving liberty, and may reclaim, though they seem now choosing them a captain back for Egypt, to bethink themselves a little, and consider whither they are rushing; to exhort this torrent [1] also of the people not to be so impetuous, but to keep their due channel; and at length recovering and uniting their better resolutions, now that they see already how open and unbounded the insolence and rage is of our common enemies, to stay these ruinous proceedings, justly and timely fearing to what a precipice of destruction the deluge of this epidemic madness would hurry us, through the general defection of a misguided and abused multitude.

The Present Means and Brief Delineation of a Free Commonwealth, Easy to be put in Practice and without Delay.

In a Letter to General Monk.

First, all endeavors speedily to be used, that the ensuing election be of such as are already firm, or inclinable to constitute a free commonwealth (according to the former qualifications decreed in Parliament, and

[1] "To exhort a torrent! The very mixture and hurry of the metaphors in Milton's mind are a reflex of the facts around him. Current, torrent, rush, rapid, avalanche, deluge hurrying to a precipice: mix and jumble such figures as we may, we but express more accurately the mad haste which London and all England were making in the end of April 1660 to bring Charles over from the Continent." — Masson, v, 688.

not yet repealed, as I hear [1]), without single person or House of Lords. If these be not such, but the contrary, who foresees not that our liberties will be utterly lost in this next Parliament, without some powerful course taken, of speediest prevention? The speediest way will be to call up forthwith the chief gentlemen out of every county; to lay before them (as your Excellency hath already, both in your published letters to the army and your declaration recited to the members of Parliament) the danger and confusion of readmitting kingship in this land, especially against the rules of all prudence and example, in a family once ejected, and thereby not to be trusted with the power of revenge. That you will not longer delay them with vain expectation, but will put into their hands forthwith the possession of a free commonwealth, if they will first return immediately and elect them, by such at least of the people as are rightly qualified, a standing council in every city and great town, which may then be dignified with the name of city, continually to consult the good and flourishing state of that place, with a competent territory adjourned; to assume the judicial laws, either those that are, or such as they themselves shall new make severally, in each commonalty, and all judicatures, all magistracies, to the administration of all justice between man and man, and all the ornaments of public civility, academies, and such like, in their own hands. Matters appertaining to men of several counties or territories may be determined, as they are here at London, or in some more convenient place, under equal judges.

Next, that in every such capital place they will choose them the usual number of ablest knights and

[1] See p. 168, n. 1.

burgesses, engaged for a commonwealth,[1] to make up the Parliament, or (as it will from henceforth be better called) the Grand or General Council of the Nation, whose office must be, with due caution, to dispose of forces both by sea and land, under the conduct of your Excellency, for the preservation of peace both at home and abroad; must raise and manage the public revenue, but with provided inspection of their accounts; must administer all foreign affairs, make all general laws, peace or war, but not without assent of the standing council in each city or such other general assembly as may be called on such occasion, from the whole territory, where they may, without much trouble, deliberate on all things fully, and send up their suffrages within a set time, by deputies appointed.[2]

Though this Grand Council be perpetual (as in that book [3] I proved would be best and most conformable to best examples), yet they will then, thus limited, have so little matter in their hands or power to endanger our liberty, and the people so much in theirs to prevent them, having all judicial laws in their own choice, and free votes in all those which concern generally the whole Commonwealth, that we shall have little cause to fear the perpetuity of our general senate, which will be then nothing else but a firm foundation and custody of our public liberty, peace, and union, through the whole Commonwealth, and the transactors of our affairs with foreign nations. If this yet be not thought enough, the known expedient may at length be used, of a partial rotation.

[1] Observe that there is not to be a free election, but those only are to be elected who believe in a commonwealth.

[2] See p. 197.

[3] The pamphlet.

Lastly, if these gentlemen convocated refuse these fair and noble offers of immediate liberty and happy condition, no doubt there be enough in every county who will thankfully accept them, your Excellency once more declaring publicly this to be your mind, and having a faithful veteran army, so ready and glad to assist you in the prosecution thereof.[1] For the full and absolute administration of law in every county, which is the difficultest of these proposals, hath been of most long desired; and the not granting it held a general grievance. The rest, when they shall see the beginnings and proceedings of these constitutions proposed, and the orderly, the decent, the civil, the safe, the noble effects thereof, will be soon convinced, and by degrees come in of their own accord, to be partakers of so happy a government.

[1] If they do not consent to this plan, the army is to be used to compel them.

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